EASY MONEY! Are film licences an excuse for a bad game? Read the truth behind Jurassic inside...

MEGA POWER

OCT 1993
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ISSUE 3
not an official sega publication

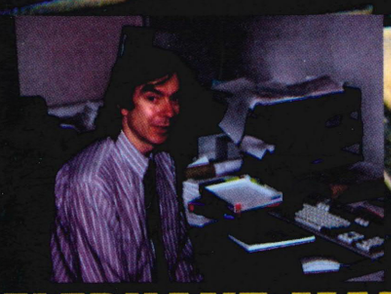
strictly for sega mega drive and mega-cd owners only

BLADE RUNNERS!

Heads up as Gunship and Thunderhawk fly into town.

FANTASTIC

The conversion of the smash Amiga game Zool exclusively reviewed inside.



ELEPHANT MAN

We bring you the exclusive interview with the man behind Ottifants!

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NHL Hockey 94 ◆ Zool ◆ Chuck Rock 2 ◆ Jurassic Park ◆ Super Baseball 2020 ◆ Gauntlet 4 ◆ Wimbledon ◆ F-15 Strike Eagle II ◆ Thunderhawk ◆ Fantastic Dizzy

INSIDE

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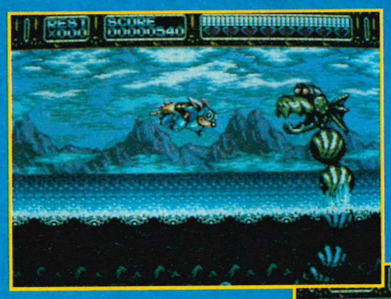
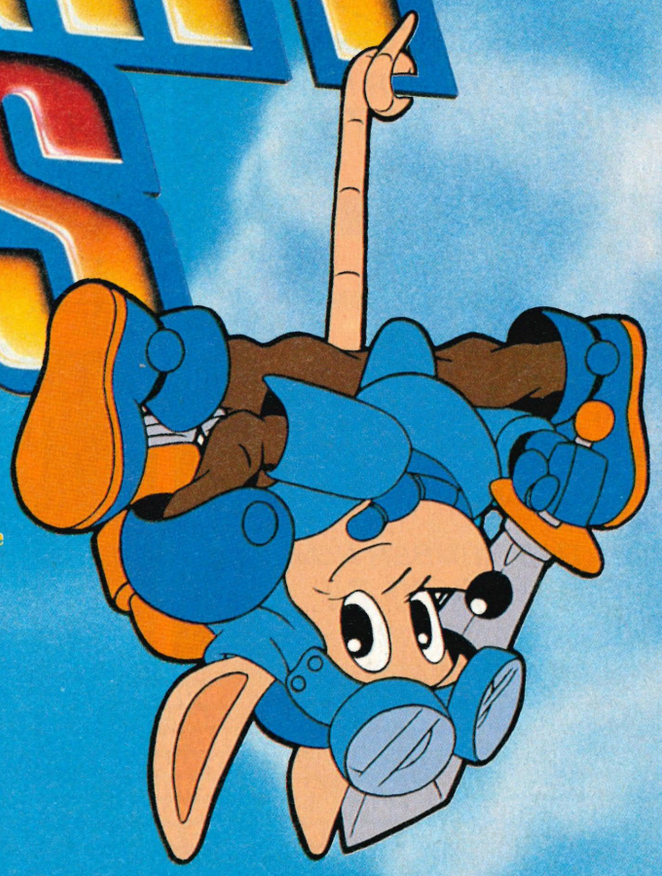
DRIVE

Meet Sparkster...

A new breed of superhero and star of Konami's all new adventure for Sega Megadrive - Rocket Knight Adventures.



ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES



Sparkster is hell bent on avenging his master Mifune's death. Armed with his jet pack and sword of steel his mission is to annihilate the Dark Lord and restore peace to his homeland once more.

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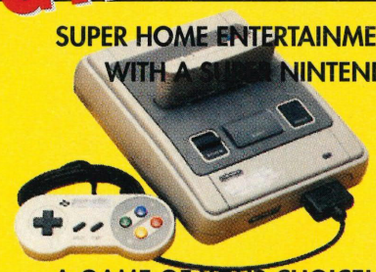

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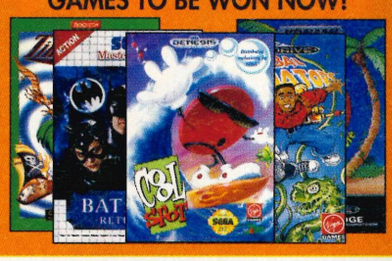

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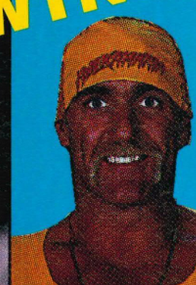

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MEGA POWER
october 1993

cover story

The classic 8-bit sim from MicroProse gets the full 16-bit console treatment from US Gold in this issue.

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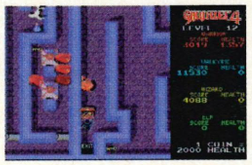

Four old heads are better than one.

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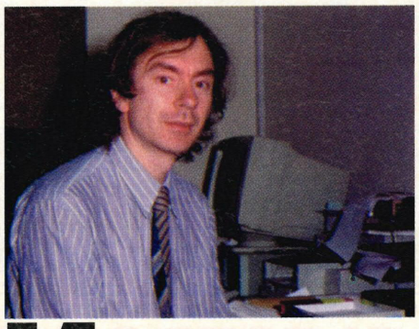

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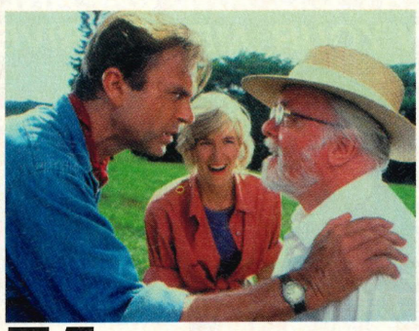
Just how tough is it to get a break on Sega?



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PRESS start

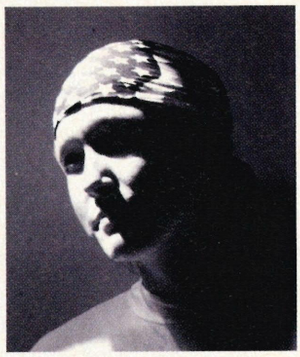
As an ex-Amiga player I often find myself horrified at the patronising manner with which the console market treats its enthusiasts. Had this been a marriage, your average gamesplayer would have filed for divorce a long time ago, on grounds of neglect and physical and mental abuse.

This month the Mega Drive 2 has been launched, for £129.99! Hold on, this is a smaller machine that has already had many of its features removed to make it cheaper to produce and yet it is still 50 quid dearer than the SNES. Oh, excuse me, you get *Sonic 2* with it, don't fall out of your seats with excitement. This coupled with the fact that Nintendo games are coming down in price whilst many Sega titles seem to be nudging their way up to 50 quid makes you start to wonder where the competitive value that made the Mega Drive so popular has gone.

And it's not just the value that's disappearing, as we career towards the much hyped Mortal Monday another question springs to mind... where the hell is *Street Fighter 2*? Better ask all the silly mags who pretended to review it months ago, I guess. This is a classic example of Sega's great dictatorship over the customers. It's all very well limiting the number of games released in the UK under the thin guise of quality control, but don't hold back games like *Micro Machines* and *Gods* for ages whilst giving us cack like *Home Alone* and *Ball Jacks*, you're not fooling anybody...

dave perry

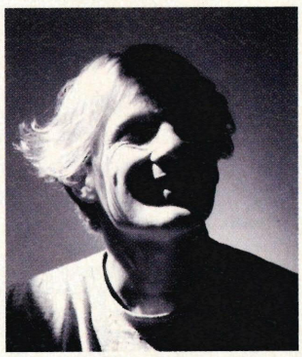
dave perry



Yes, we knew it was inevitable. Eventually someone was going to wimp out of the challenge, and this month a flustered Andrew Wright explained that he, unfortunately, didn't have the time. Mmm... Anyway, luckily we had a more than worthy replacement in the form of Acclaim's Darren Lee. But even Darren eventually wiggled out of it, explaining to a luckless Dave that he couldn't make it to Bournemouth because he was too busy or ill or something. Finally, the courageous Anna Macario of Domark stepped into the hot-spot and claiming to be the company's champion sped down the M3 to face The Kid.

As well as his beloved challenge, you'll also find the country's most feared games player giving you the low-down on the prehistoric games, *Chuck Rock 2* and *Jurassic Park*. Dave's a bit of an old dinosaur himself.

stevie bough

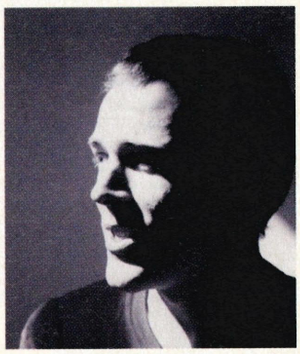


Just check out the picture on the right. Is Steve still wearing the same T-shirt as in the pictures in issues one and two? £10 says he is. Steve, however, protests that he does actually own ten identical grey T-shirts...

After just three issues now, Steve has finally perfected the "free" lunch wangle, and this month is working his way onto the "free" evening meal scam. People who have bought Steve a free meal recently include Sega, Codemasters, EA, Core and MicroProse. As we all know, there's no such thing as a "free" meal in this business, so please take this into account when reading anything by Steve in connection with any of these companies.

Needless to say, Steve's top games this month included *Thunderhawk, NHL 94* and *Dizzy*...

dominic handy



It's always a sad time when anyone departs – and this month we must say farewell, au revoir, arrivederci and ciao to Dom. A self-taught tyrant in his years as managing editor we can't help feeling that the tears people will be shedding will be tears of joy, not sadness, as writers and designers run riot and deadlines are overshot and reviews half-written.

This month Dom has taken great joy in giving his incisive views on every game, knowing full well that whatever he says, he won't be around next month to feel the wrath of irate PR people. In reflective mode, our Dom explains, "It is a sad reflection on society today that as us writers decrease in numbers, so the marketing and advertising people increase." And on that note, we must thank Coca Cola, Sharp Electronics, Marlboro and East West without whom this issue wouldn't have been possible...

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POWER NEWS

SEGA LAUNCH MEGA DRIVE 2

At last, I hear you cry. Yes, Sega have finally made their Mega Drive 2 available for general release. After a long and drawn out wait, the MD2 is now available nation-wide from all good retail stores priced £129.99. If you've not seen any pictures of it already, the new console is slimmer, slightly smaller and much lighter than its predecessor. News of the Mega-CD 2, hasn't been confirmed, but we already know that they're in production and should hit the shops in September, but as of yet we have no confirmation on the price although sources were claiming that it won't change. Undoubtedly, Sega, who are renowned for their shrewd marketing, will be on the case and pulling in all those Christmas pounds that they do so love.

VIRGIN WINNING CUSTOMER LOYALTY?

Virgin Interactive Entertainment, as they now like to be known, have announced a scheme that they hope will build customer loyalty and draw attention to Virgin.

The computer games wing of Richard Branson's increasingly successful empire have certainly made their presence felt since joining the ranks of the market.

The scheme will issue customers buying computer games in Virgin stores a stamp collection book. Customers will be given a stamp for every £10.00 spent on software. When enough are collected, the customer is entitled to exchange the stamps for money off further game purchases. Up to 30 tokens can be collected giving the customer a total value of £40.00 off each game. The scheme is operational in most stores now and will last for a year. Virgin are confident that the scheme will see off the competition offering weaker promotional schemes.

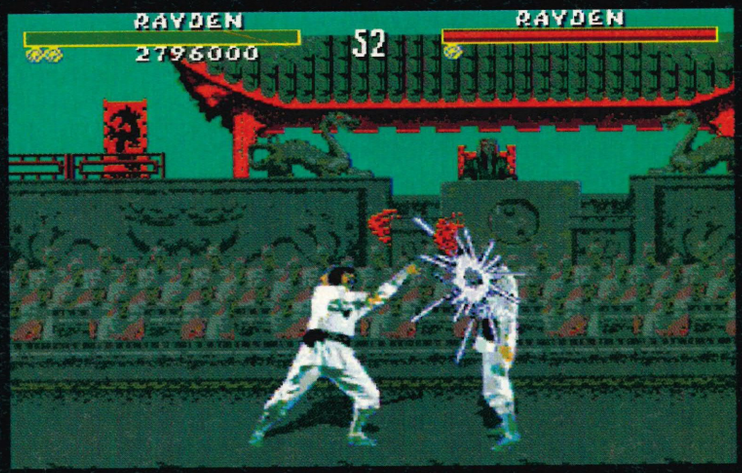
F1 RACING FOR PUBLICITY

Domark's long awaited racing game, F1, has been carrying out a major promotional campaign. A fleet of lorries has been ordered to be driven around London, Paris, Hamburg and Madrid. This will no doubt inform the European market that Domark mean business. Predictions for sales have been estimated at up to 250,000 cartridge sales in the first week. The promotional campaign will carry on running until the launch of the game.

october 1993

JOYPADS WITHOUT LEADS

This sounds good – no more tangled wires and no need to sit close to the screen because of restrictions on how far you can move. MSU Ltd, have come up with an excellent idea of remote control joypads. The joypads can operate from up to 20 feet away from the screen, thus giving you huge freedom of games playing. This means you can now play your favourite games whilst lying in bed (if you don't do so already) or anywhere else you choose. The product is aptly titled the Micro Genius and has an extra wide beam that will follow the controller exactly. The added benefit is that two controllers can use the same receiver. Retailing at £29.95 for the joypad and receiver or £19.95 for the joypad alone, these pads should allow more freedom to games players. They are available now from all good computer shops.



TOO MUCH VIOLENCE ON TV?

The running controversy of too much violence on television rears its proverbial head again after two major shows announced that they won't be showing violent games on their respective programmes. Movies, Games and Videos (formerly Movies, Movies, Movies) and Gimme 5 have both decided that in future they won't be featuring games with a strong violent content. Games such as Mortal Kombat and Street Fighter II are considered too graphically violent to be screened. However, shows such as GamesMaster and Bad Influence are not in the slightest bit bothered about this. They will both continue in the same format that they always have. Games Master are even planning a whole show based on Mortal Kombat, even going so far as to feature the real actors who portrayed the moves for the game. The news seems more like a cowardly stance from TV producers on the saga of violence in games. What really counts is the view of the youth buying population, without whom there wouldn't be much of an industry.

IS THIS THE FUTURE?

American Laser Games, creators of arcade machines such as Space Pirates and Mad Dog Mcree, are planning to launch their products onto the Mega-CD.

They have officially designated five titles to be released onto the Mega-CD over the next year or so. The first release will be Mad Dog Mcree, which proved to be a huge success in the amusement arcades, followed by Mad Dog 2, Space Pirates, Who Shot Johnny Rock and Gallagher's Gallery. The main object behind these games is to shoot images of live actors with laser guns. They all have wild story lines and have proved a massive success in the States. Plans to release the CD games with use of the Menacer are in the pipeline, which leaves the pondering question, will it work on the Mega CD.

SEGA ON THE MOVE

With the launch and successful few months of Sega World in Bournemouth comes the news that Sega will be opening something much bigger in the States. Virtualand to be opened in Las Vegas will be part of a featured venue in the property of Luxor and is due to open in October. Virtualand will be a 20,000 square foot hi-tech arcade featuring the cream of the crop of Sega's latest arcade games.

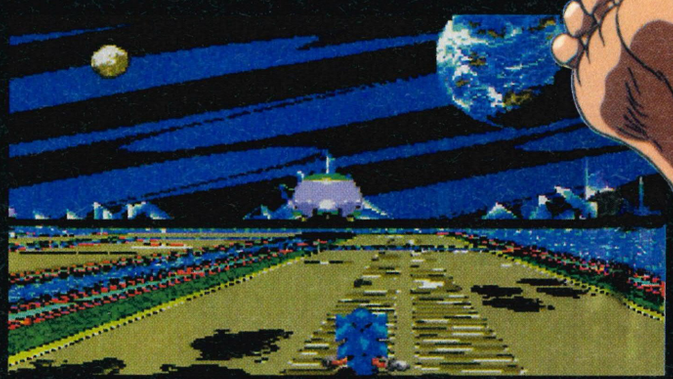
POWER NEWS

STREET FIGHTER 2-AT LAST

The continuing saga of *Street Fighter 2* has finally been resolved with the announcement from Sega that the game is to be released in October. After the amount of speculation that has surrounded the game over the past six months, the official release date will come as fantastic news to the thousands of *SF 2* fans.

The game will differ from its Nintendo brother. Set on a massive 24 Mbit cartridge, it'll include the Championship and Turbo versions which also feature the Hyper fighting and extra options, making the cart totally exclusive to the Mega Drive. Sega say the marketing of this product will be kept to a minimum, as the game doesn't really need it. Indeed, cartridge sales are expected to exceed six figures within the first few weeks of release. Retailing at £59.99, it seems a tad expensive, but just watch it sell.

THE LEGEND IS BACK



Yes, our spiky blue friend Sonic the Hedgehog is back in another adventure, this time on the Mega CD. With almost a year gone by since *Sonic 2* burst onto the Mega Drive, *Sonic CD* will be the biggest game yet on the CD. In next month's Mega Power, we'll review the whole game and give you our expert verdict on what we think (brilliant, and that's even before we've played it).

Gone is Tails, he had to take a holiday after his last excursion. In his place is Sonic's new girlfriend, Rosy. She must help the spiky hero again defeat the evil Dr Robotnik, who has come to Sonic's homeland and has also managed to create a time machine. With Mega CD games on the up, this is definitely the big one, and I for one don't think this will fail us — read all about it in November's Mega Power.

IS THERE NO END TO JURASSIC PARK

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the cinema, and finally get away from dinosaurs, the game of the film is set to hit the Mega Drive. Released this week and retailing at £49.99, the game will be backed by a television campaign, and will undoubtedly sell well purely on the hype of the film. The CD version is set to follow in a few weeks and features actual footage from the film itself, as well as the usual CD add-ons. With initial orders already blooming, the game is almost certain to follow in the over-large footsteps of the movie's mega-success.

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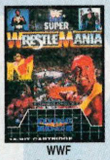
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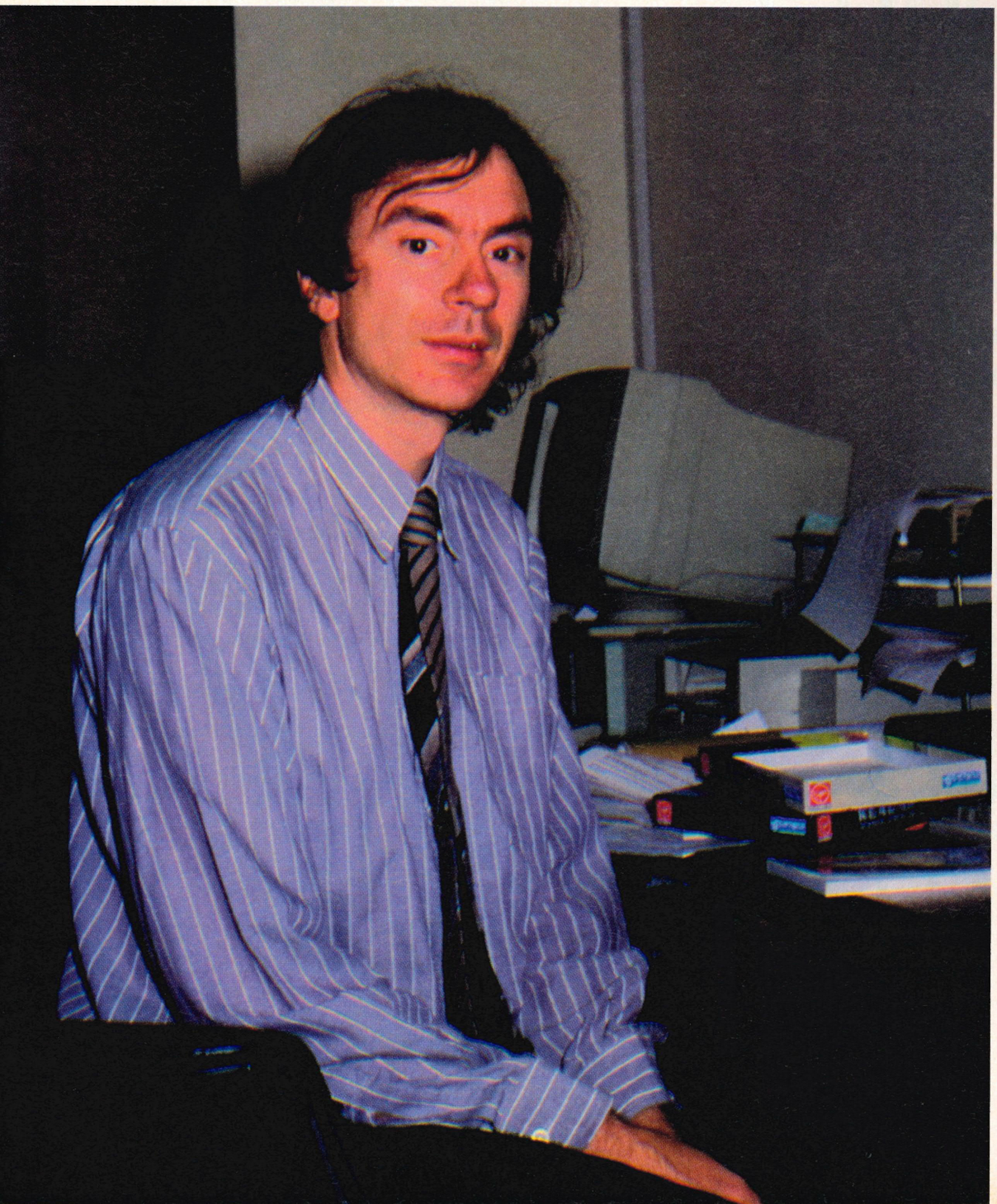
FORM01AUG

head turner

In the hotseat this month, David Graham tracks down top programmer of yesteryear, and part-time Spender lookalike, Steve Turner. At present, Steve's software development company, Graftgold, are working on their first original console game, inspired by a crazy, weird German cartoon.



In the ten years they've been programming, Graftgold have made something of a name for themselves writing quality titles for machines like the Speccy, Commodore 64, Amiga and PC. Now they're coding for Sega, with a couple of 8-bit titles –*Superman*, *Offroad Racer* – already behind them. Their best-known game to date amongst console players is probably *Fire & Ice*, a colourful platform romp with elements of *Sonic* and a hint of *James Pond* penguin type-fun, which strangely only appeared on 8-bit. And, although Graftgold are currently programming Sega Europe's first ever country-specific title (a German game for Germany), their director and project manager, Steve Turner, is still not laughing all the way to the bank.

"Possibly the Japanese know a lot more [about the Mega Drive] than they let on to us, which would give them the edge on programming the machine."

What's the new Sega project all about?
"Well, it's a German cartoon series called Ottifants, and it's rumoured to be the next big cartoon series after The Simpsons. I'm not sure when we're going to see it in this country, but certainly in Germany, it's a very well-known cartoon.

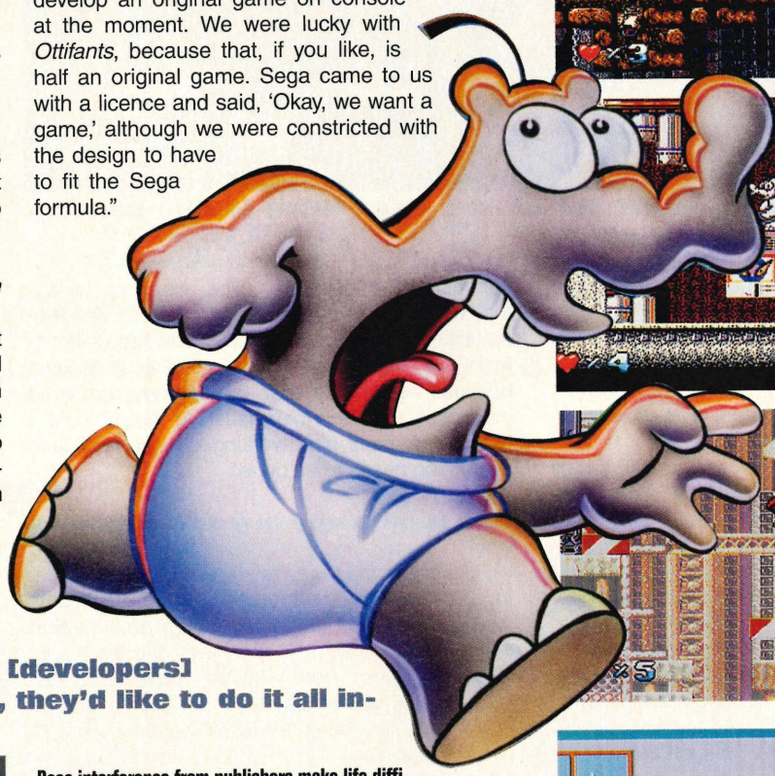
"It's [based around] a little family of elephants, although we concentrate on the baby, Bruno, who seems to be the main character in the series. He kind of daydreams all the time, and he's in a world all of his own. In the cartoons he thinks like an adult, although he acts like a baby. There's a lot of jokes because of that. And it's quite hard to actually get that across in the game, but what we've done, we've set him in an imaginary world, so he sees things like his house like a baby would. So he sees his toys as really big, and he sees the dungeon as a place where there's ghosts and spiders and all sorts of things."

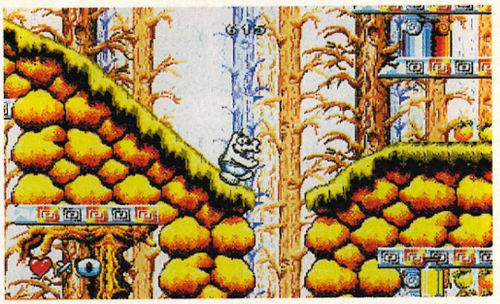
So what's your best-selling game to date?
"Probably *Uridium* (C64), although *Fire & Ice* is coming hot on its heels. I think *Uridium* sold about 35,000 on its first release, but then it went on to sell every Christmas for about five years..."

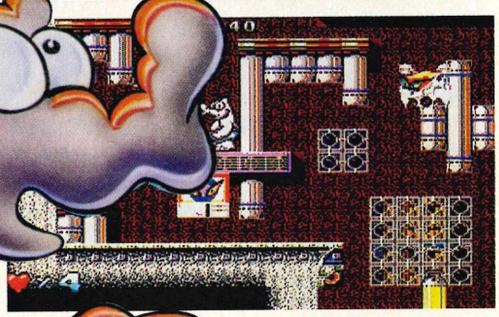
It seems odd that Sega Europe should choose to reject *Fire & Ice* for a Mega Drive conversion...
"No, it seems very hard. To get an original product out on the Mega Drive is like banging your head against a brick wall. For instance, *Gods* (which Graftgold converted onto the Mega Drive for the Bitmap Bros): I think they've found a publisher who will do it now, but it's taken a year of hard negotiating to get that across. Yet it's being released in Japan, whatever. Now *Fire & Ice*: we've got a Japanese company interested in it, but over here, it's very difficult to get past Sega approval, because really, they're just restricting the number of titles that are around on the Mega Drive."

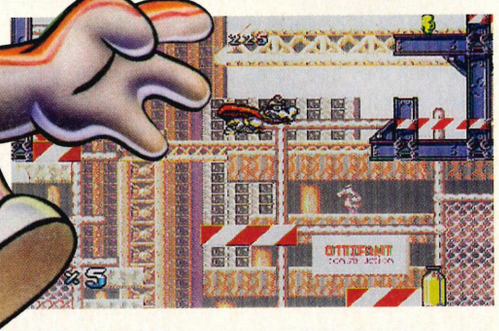
So you'd agree that Sega software is becoming a little formulaic?
"Yeah, I think it is at the moment, and I can see why. The problem is that the risk has gone up with the cost of cartridges. People aren't willing to experiment, or to bear the risk of experimenting. So if you like, we have to experiment on what remains of the computer market, and see if we get something that works, like *Lemmings*. That was a radical deviation. That would never have come about on console first, that had to happen on computer."

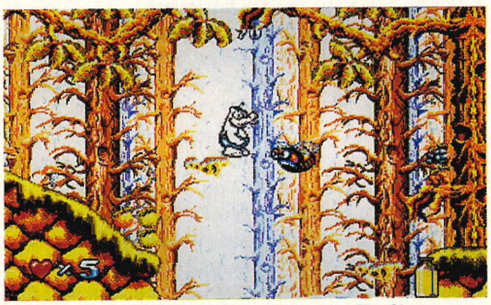
So what other formats are you developing for?
"Well, our original games, we're developing on Amiga and PC first, and console really we see as conversions, because it's almost impossible to develop an original game on console at the moment. We were lucky with *Ottifants*, because that, if you like, is half an original game. Sega came to us with a licence and said, 'Okay, we want a game,' although we were constricted with the design to have to fit the Sega formula."





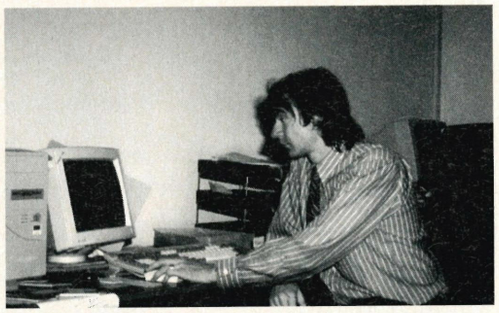






Following in the footsteps of the cult TV series The Simpsons comes a German attempt at adult cartoon humour, *Ottifants*. It is the first game to be developed for Sega Germany with the German market in mind.

"I think they [publishers] see us [developers] as a necessary evil. If they could, they'd like to do it all in-house."



So what do you prefer developing, computer or console stuff?
"Computer stuff, really, because you've got more chance to be original. On the consoles, there's a very strict regime that knows what they want, and I think they're a bit narrow-minded in the way that they see, for instance, an arcade game has to be exactly like their model arcade game, which means you can't diverge out into different styles of game. Everything has to be the same; like the main player's got to tap his foot and he's got to be able to jump on the meanies to kill them. And by the time you add all the restrictions together, you get a copy of every other platform game that's ever been out, and I think that's a bit of a problem at the moment."

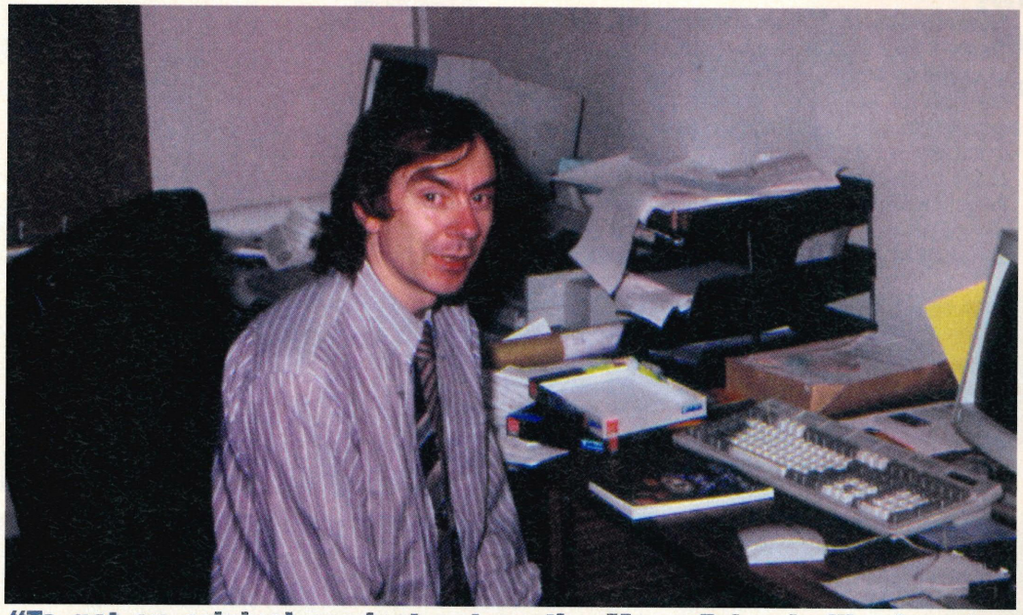
Does interference from publishers make life difficult?
"You won't find a publisher who'll let you have a free hand to develop a console game."

How easy is it for a small developer to get into the console market, then?
"Not easy at all. We've spent a couple of years trying. We got in through the back door, in a way. Two attempts to get into the console market ended in tragedy. Our first product was *Paradroid* for the PC Engine, and Hewson [the publisher] went down before we completed, so the whole lot was scrapped. Our next console development was *Total Recall* for Mirrorsoft. Unfortunately, Mirrorsoft went down right in the middle of it, so that got scrapped. In the end, we got into the consoles by doing a conversion for the Bitmap Bros [*Gods*], and once we'd done that, then people could see, oh yes, we could do consoles as well as computers and it all opened up for us.

"It was very difficult actually getting that first one, and up until we did that, I was asking publishers all around and it's very, very difficult to find someone who's developing for 16-bit console in this country. Virgin, for instance; when we approached them,

head turner

"We've had our fingers burned by lots of publishers, and they've had their fingers burned by lots of developers. So there's a kind of mutual distrust that goes on..."



"To get an original product out on the Mega Drive is like banging your head against a brick wall."

most of the 16-bit development was being done in the States, rather than in this country. They had plenty of 8-bit work, and in the end we took on 8-bit work because we couldn't get 16-bit work."

So how do the big publishers view outside development companies?

"I think they see us as a necessary evil. If they could, they'd like to do it all in-house. I've seen this happen several times, and as the market picks up, they all think, 'Oh, it's cheaper for us to do it in-house, because there's not enough developers,' and they think that they can recruit it. As soon as things get tight again, they find that in-house programmers, if you get a mass of them in a publisher's, there's not as much work output as from an outside developers, so they tend to start losing all their in-house programmers and they start putting more work out to developers. I think that it kind of happens in phases...

"...A lot of the publishers view developers as kind of freelancers, that are unreliable, and there's this kind of credibility gap, and there are not many professional houses around. I suppose it's the same for us: we've had our fingers burned by lots of publishers, and they've had their fingers burned by lots of developers. So there's a kind of mutual distrust that goes on..."

What's the market like for small developers?

"We've had plenty of work, but the problem always is the amount of time between when an idea is put to us and when the contract is signed; that kind of gaps seems to have gone up enormously as the risk has gone up. A lot of people talk about a project now and in the end it just won't happen... because people are talking about hundreds of thousands of pounds instead of tens of thousands, so they tend to talk about it earlier. They don't want to spend any money until it's absolutely sure; they've got like Japanese or US contracts that they want to match up for distribution and unless they get the right terms for that, they don't want to start the project.

"The problem is, if all that takes too long, then suddenly when they say, 'Yes, we want to go!' they've already burned up most of the development time, and suddenly they want the development time contracted to a ridiculously short time, because again, they want their money converted into product quicker than usual. At the moment, I find that formula isn't working out too well, and something needs to be done."

How do you rate the current line up of software on the Mega Drive?

"I'd like to see the range of product that you get on, for instance, the Amiga appearing. There seems to be a lot of stuff drifting over from America that doesn't seem to be up in quality, yet there are a lot of original British titles – like, say, *Chaos Engine* – that are kind of blocked off. And it seems strange that if there is a need to restrict the titles, why not pick the best ones?"

Have developers finally pushed the Mega Drive as far as it will go, or is there more to come?

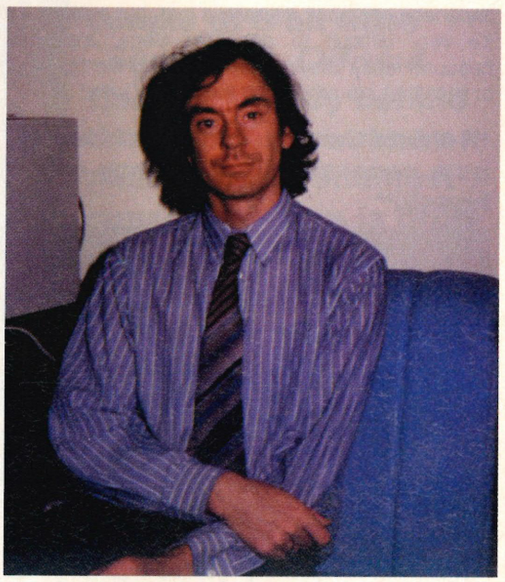
"I think there is stuff that can be done, but it's very difficult. We're not really given enough information about the machine, so we can only handle it in the standard way. I've heard about software that is pushing the Mega Drive further than we thought it was possible to go; if we were given the information we need, then we'd be able to do it. For instance, the video chips in them: there may be other modes and things that you can use, but unless you know how to address the registers, it's very, very hard to sort of find that stuff out by experimentation. And plus you need to know whether that's going to be standard across any existing Mega Drives and any projected future ones, and we can't really know that without knowledge from Sega. Unfortunately, the information seems to be very closely guarded. Possibly the Japanese know a lot more than they let on to us, which would give them the edge on programming the machine."

What about the Mega-CD, are you impressed with that?

"I haven't really seen anything that impresses me. At the moment, from what I've seen, the video resolution doesn't really make it the type of machine to run the sort of thing that I would expect from CD games. What it could be used for is mass data storage for existing sorts of games, and I think it could be used very well for that. Or even putting several arcade games on the same disc, so that you can get them without paying such a terrific price, but no-one really seems to be interested in bringing the price down."

Can you see the Amiga CD32 and 3DO having a big impact?

"I think they will. If Commodore survive long enough to establish the machine, I'd say that one's going to be good. The 3DO looks very, very interesting, and the backing for it looks big enough for it to make an impression... by the time 3DO comes out, we're going to have an Amiga CD32, we'll have Sega's Mega-CD – but they [Sega] are bound to have other models coming out – and Nintendo have probably got one up their sleeves, just waiting for the right time on the market. There's also the PC CD, which is already established, so we're already diversifying into lots of lines... At the moment, I think the PC CD is the most likely to succeed. Amiga, I think, if they can keep their act together, are going to have a strong European presence. Sega and Nintendo are always going to be there just because of the massive backing. 3DO is an outsider, but seeing how the momentum for that is building up, I expect that to have an impact, but that's the order of precedence at the moment..."



"You won't find a publisher who'll let you have a free hand to develop a console game."

Where do you see the market going from here?

"I can see a swing towards the CD stuff as it starts becoming established, but I think it's going to take a proper CD machine with a 32-bit processor to show what it can do. And then suddenly that will be the machine that everyone wants to have and to play."

The UK version of *Ottifants* is released on the Mega Drive in October 1993.

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gunning for GLORY

With the extraordinary success of Desert Strike, everyone's jumping on the helicopter bandwagon. First there was EA's own sequel, Jungle Strike, then there was Core's Thunderhawk (reviewed on page 54), now US Gold have flown in with their attempt to steal the limelight, Gunship. Stevie Bough shouts, "chocks away".

MicroProse's seminal chopper sim *Gunship* was originally released back in 1988 on the Spectrum and Commodore 64. After that followed conversions to the Amiga, Apple II and PC versions. With such a strong, successful background, the only question we have to ask is, why has it taken so long for someone to bring it to the Mega Drive?

With the Sega version, though, US Gold have redesigned the whole game, hopefully retaining all the accuracy and realism of the original, but updating it for the Mega Drive unique capabilities.

Now *Gunship* offers you brilliant combat action combined with a little bit of flight simulation. The eponymous gunship is the US army's most sophisticated piece of weaponry. Its primary function is to provide close ground support, especially against enemy front line armoured vehicles and anti-aircraft weapons. It's worth bearing in mind that this high-tech piece of military equipment costs $7.3 million to build, so whatever you do, try not to crash it. Luckily US Gold have generously included a simulator option in which you can train, so you don't crash the beast before you get into the six missions.

On starting the main game, you'll choose your mission and then go to your debriefing. There are four theatres, or as US Gold like to call them, war environments. Choose from N Europe, where you will have to confront terrorists trying to establish a power base; S America, where you become part of the jungle drug enforcement agency trying to eradicate the barons; Asia, where your task is to free civilians from extremely hostile warlords; and the Arctic, where you have to wipe out present day pirates who are threatening to take over the vast wealth of mineral and ore deposits.

The only way to advance from one theatre to another is to complete on the easy setting three, or the difficulty setting six missions. Out of the sextet of missions, you can choose from destroying air targets, destroying ground installations or destroying moving ground targets.

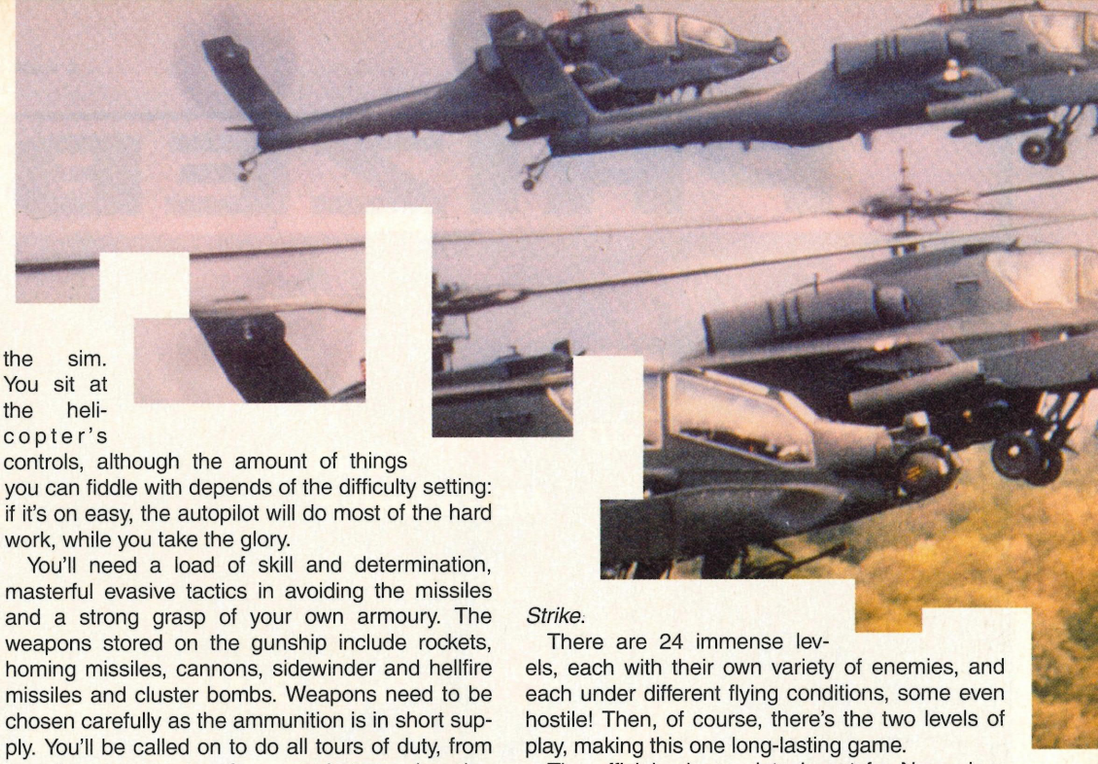
Whoops, I've just badly crashed this helicopter with my atrocious flying. Luckily I have two more credits so I can climb straight back into the cockpit and try to destroy some enemies without crashing, again!

My mission debriefing: from the board and the military looking geezer pointing at it, you can see that I have chosen to destroy ground targets. I hope I've decided on the right mission as I'm a bit nervous about flying.

From the inside of the chopper. I'd better get my finger on the trigger, as these rather scary-looking helicopters are on the way to rub my nose in the dirt. These are Vietnam-style choppers, hopefully not piloted by veterans.

Apart from destruction you also do your fair share of good deeds. You'll protect convoy missions as they pass through hostile terrain and environment. You'll also rescue troops and civilians, and lastly it will also be your job on these missions to deliver supplies.

Before you set off, you are shown a map on which you can place waypoints to guide you throughout your mission. Using the tactical map you can locate re-fuelling sites, and re-arm landing sites. After plotting your missions, you enter

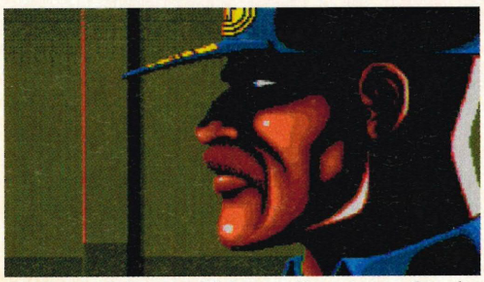


the sim. You sit at the helicopter's controls, although the amount of things you can fiddle with depends of the difficulty setting: if it's on easy, the autopilot will do most of the hard work, while you take the glory.

You'll need a load of skill and determination, masterful evasive tactics in avoiding the missiles and a strong grasp of your own armoury. The weapons stored on the gunship include rockets, homing missiles, cannons, sidewinder and hellfire missiles and cluster bombs. Weapons need to be chosen carefully as the ammunition is in short supply. You'll be called on to do all tours of duty, from rescuing your mates from combat, to dropping urgent supplies to the front line. *Gunship* offers you the best of both worlds, you have all the planning and tactics of a game like *F-15* but also all the arcade firepower you get in a game like *Jungle Strike*.

There are 24 immense levels, each with their own variety of enemies, and each under different flying conditions, some even hostile! Then, of course, there's the two levels of play, making this one long-lasting game.

The official release date is set for November, and the price as of yet is undecided. US Gold are not a name you would instantly recognise with flight sims, but with *Gunship* they have chosen just the right format to test the water with.

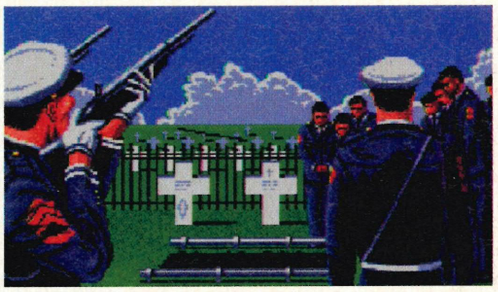


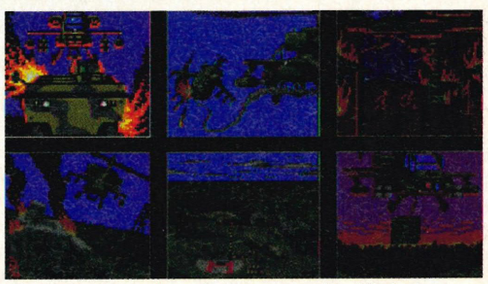
By all accounts I assume this is your officer who runs through the mission debriefing with you. With those flashing eyes he certainly seems like a mean dude and one that you wouldn't want to get on the wrong side of. In order to avoid confrontation and possibly witnessing your own death, make sure you keep the gunship in the air.

This is a weird one, you have to plot a line to where you want your first mission to start. It might be that you want to start from the arms dump, or maybe from the weapons base, the choice is yours. Once you have chosen (only plot to one mission, or else you won't take off) where you'd like to blow up, fly away and do the business, keeping an eye on the fuel.

Again, another shot from inside the cockpit. From the indications of the control panel, there's an enemy appearing on your radar to the right. Prepare yourself, as within a few seconds it will be flying into view waiting for you to take pot-shots at it. Now is the time to swap from ordinary guns to full-on missiles, that is if you wish to continue playing this game.

In the flight simulation mode I am on the trail of three enemy helicopters. Armed with missiles, get ready to take them all out. The flight sim mode makes the enemy easier to kill, so these three shouldn't take too much of a beating. Still, if you're half asleep or heavily on drugs you're going to mess up. So clear your head, lock on with your missiles and blow them out of the sky. Remember, winners never do drugs.





The above picture shows the title screens in all their glory, basically they are just shots of a series of missions you will undertake. The top picture shows not such a happy picture of the game... it's your funeral.

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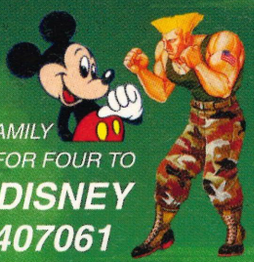

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Zool 22

the review

Mega Drive or Mega-CD. Look here first to see if it's on your machine.

Instead of blathering on for thousands of words explaining every single element in the game, we give you pictures instead. After all, a picture tells a thousand words, and with the amount of pictures we use, you'll be getting the equivalent of a magazine's worth of text for every review. Beneath each picture, we tell you exactly what's going on and what we think about it.

Out of ten, here's the rating we gave it.

We get deep in the pixels of a game and try to convey the action by showing close-ups from the game. Here you could see anything from a series of slamdunks to the demise of General Ortega.

If all you want to know is what we think about the game, this is where you should start. Each of us has our own gaming likes and dislikes, and it's here we can let rip. Our strict reviewing policy means every one of us must justify our opinion to the others.

One picture in each review will have numbers scattered over it. Using these, we can go even more in-depth explaining elements of the game. Each number corresponds to a numbered caption near the picture.

A bit of background to familiarise yourself with what sort of game we're reviewing. You're bound to find something here that you didn't already know, so this is the best place to start.

No, we won't be pulling some strange facial expression in the hope that you can work it out (that's so Eighties...). Each picture fulfils two purposes: it tells you who's written the comment, and what they thought of the game. Red (hot!) means "I think the game's great". Green (neutral) says "it was fun, but I wouldn't buy it". Finally, the blue (cold) face says "I wouldn't even recommend this to that annoying kid in MacDonald's". Any game with a blue face on it should be approached with trepidation.

Where applicable, we tell you a bit more about games similar to the one we're reviewing.

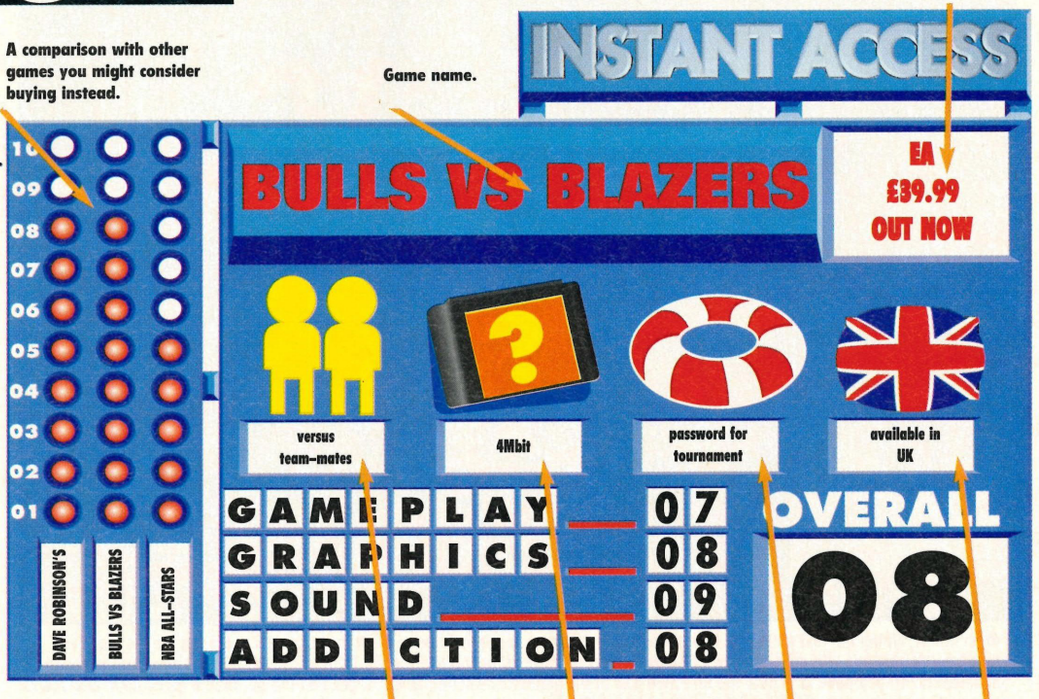
Here we give you the hard facts. Read this and the personal comments to get a quick view of the game.

the ratings

Who it's from, how much it is, and when it's coming out.

A comparison with other games you might consider buying instead.

Game name.



How many players can partake in the action.

How big the cart is (not applicable to CD games).

If there's a save option, how it works and what it saves.

Where in the world it's available.

GAMEPLAY
Takes into account how the game feels. Is it fun to play? Was it difficult to get into? How original is the design?

GRAPHICS
Looks at animation, use of colour, definition, variety and functionality. Ultimately, does it look as good as it should do?

SOUND
Are the tunes and sound effects any good, and, secondly, do they suit the game and build a convincing atmosphere?

ADDICTION
Most games are fun initially, but how long will you be playing it? Is it the sort of game you'd play months after buying it?

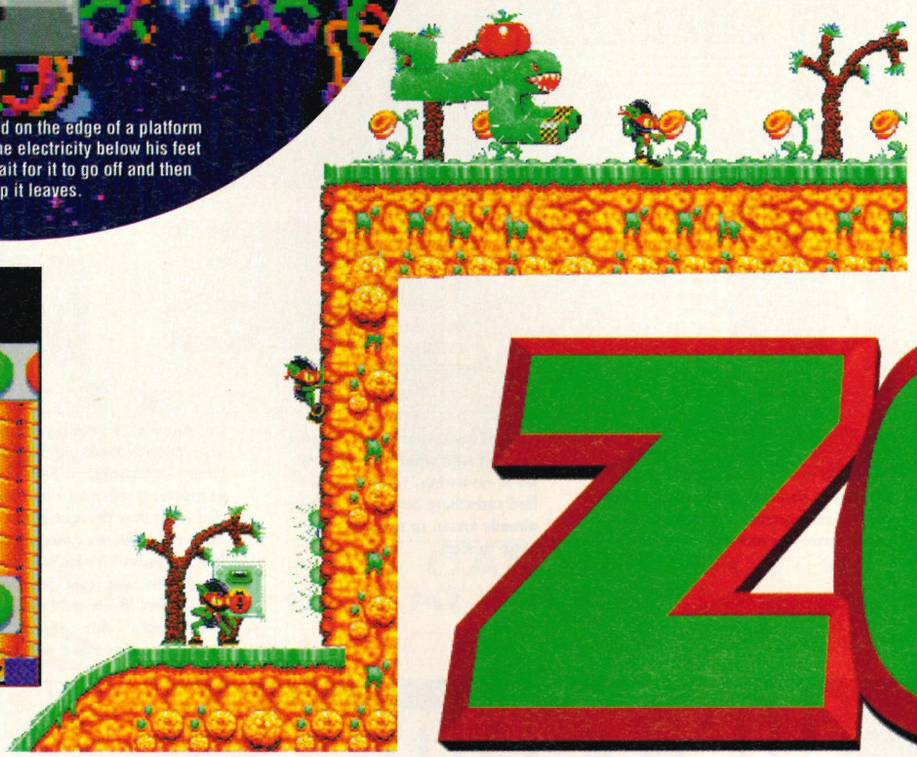
OVERALL

- 0-3 – Don't bother. Serious damage to street-cred.
- 4-5 – A very risky purchase. Don't blame us if you get a dog.
- 6-8 – A decent game, but may only be suited to certain players.
- 9-10 – Everyone will love this. We'd lash out the cash for it.

The green alien stood on the edge of a platform trying to act hard. The electricity below his feet comes on and off, wait for it to go off and then drop between the gap it leaves.

The banana people on the fruit world always prove to be a hindrance to our Zool's journey. On this occasion Zool has managed to scare them away. They will only go for a while, soon to be replaced by some much harder bananas. You can get rid of them by firing, but watch out, they're slippy.

Riding on the duck's back to safety, Zool must carry off one of his spectacular spinning jumps to reach the platform to the right. He's highly practised in this art so it shouldn't be too much of a problem.



I must admit, typing the text for this at four o'clock on a Thursday morning looking at all these sweets is driving me insane. Even though my dentist has told me I need two fillings I still can't fight off my love for candy. Zool has found himself on some revolving gobstoppers: all you have to is hold the direction pad in the opposite direction in which you need to go, then a quick jump and you're onto relative safety amongst those delicious sugar canes.

Starting way back in the early Eighties, Gremlin Graphics quickly established themselves as one of the computer games industry's top dogs, releasing such timeless classics as *Monty Mole*. But after leaving their sterile office in US Gold's Birmingham headquarters in an attempt to retain their independence, Gremlin, and their managing director Ian Stewart, returned to relative obscurity in their beloved Sheffield.

After a short break, Gremlin returned with gusto to the computer scene, releasing the groundbreaking *Lotus Turbo Challenge*. Now on its third Amiga game, *Lotus* was picked up for a Sega conversion in late 1993 by Electronic Arts. The pinnacle of their return to gaming came in 1992 when they launched a massive, *Sonic*-bashing promotion for their colourful Amiga hit *Zool*. The arcade adventure soon shot to the top of the charts, and still regularly dips in and out of there even now.

A Sega version was put off to let Amiga sales fully utilise its single-format status, but finally Gremlin have done what Amiga owners said could never be done, and squeezed *Zool* onto a Mega

On the first level Zool obviously wants to get to the two extra lives that await him through the wall. The way to do this is to make Zool fire from his hand and blast the wall away. Once done, you can drop down and collect the two lives. The platforms above it are made of melty fudge so they soon give way when Zool stands on them. With this game being reasonably difficult, the extra lives certainly come in use. However, they aren't in large abundance so when you get the opportunity, seize every one you can — you're certainly going to need them.

ZOOL

The first level of Zool is jam-packed with confectionery, so imagine sweet-toothed Stevie Bough's joy as he feasted his eyes on enough sucrose to last him till the end of the week. Join our jelly baby as he munches his way through Gremlin's acidic adventure.

Drive cart.

The eponymous Zool is not from this world, he's a ninja of the nth dimension(!). His special skills include running at extremely fast speeds, climbing and spinning. He also has a built-in gun that comes in handy when faced with flying CDs or liquorice allsorts. Zool can also use magic of various sorts, including smart bombs and a high jump.

The object of Zool's journeys are to spread positive thoughts and to encourage free use of imagination. Unfortunately, his space-ship encounters engine problems and Zool's forced to land on the nearest planet. Unfortunately (again!), and here's where the plot gets a bit corny, the planet has been overtaken by the evil Krool (imaginative) and his side kick Mental Block. They totally reject the ideas of freedom of thought and have turned all the creatures and objects into killing machines. Zool must, obviously, now travel the globe and spread his positive vibes to return good feeling etc to the planet.

Still a relatively new format to Gremlin, the world of the Mega Drive is one that can certainly establish developers. With a character like Zool, Gremlin are certainly going in the right direction.

OVERALL 08

What a transformation! I didn't like Zool much on the Amiga, despite its commercial success I somehow felt that it never quite looked at home. Perhaps the misguided swipe at Sonic in the advertising didn't help, but I've always thought that large platform games like this really do belong on console.

However, on the Mega Drive this game really does comes into its own. The large sprites, the vivid scenery and the fantastic speed all seem far better suited to the console than the home computer and this looks set to join the likes of Sonic and Cool Spot as one of the great platform games available on cart right now.

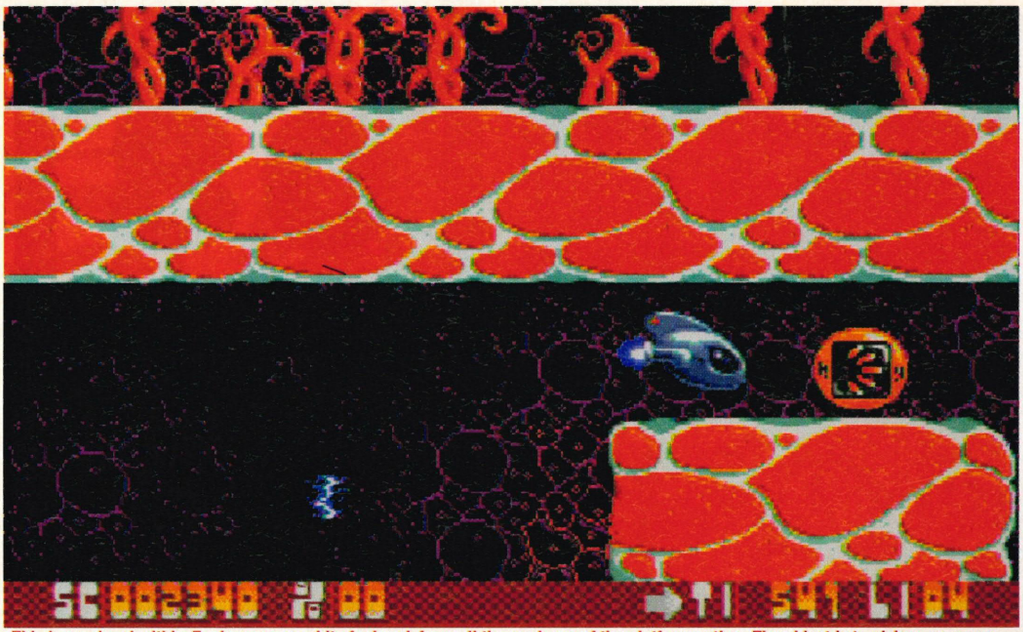
Zool contains everything a classic Mega Drive game could need. The spot FX are excellent, the levels varied and every now and then the game throws up a wonderful little surprise for you, usually in the form of a new special ability for your hero or a playing environment that demands you change your tactics to suit the new challenges presented.

Forget the fact that this is a conversion of an Amiga title, Zool is an even better game on the Mega Drive and is sure to impress anybody who likes their platform action slick, frantic and bright!

DAVE

Zool looks set to join Sonic and Cool Spot as one of the great platform games on cart right now.

This is the end-of-level guardian for the first world. This bee or hornet (we're not sure!) flies down with the coconut rings for wings — fire at these and they will disappear, then shoot the bee about four times and it's history.



This bonus level within *Zool* comes as a bit of a break from all the madness of the platform action. The object is to pick up as many bonus items as you possibly can without bumping into anything. The trouble is that there are loads of objects in your way that can put Zool off his path. Clever steering will ensure that Zool returns safely — if you are a clumsy driver then the likelihood is that you're going to have a serious accident, so no drunk driving.

I remember playing Zool around a year ago on the Amiga; with the Mega Drive version, I haven't been let down. Gremlin seem to have the perfect format for this game, it's hard yet challenging, very fast and the music is excellent.

The best thing about this game is the graphics. They are outstanding, hugely varied and ever changing. The detail within this game is fantastic, the characters move with tremendous fluidity. The beauty is that it's all so diverse; each world is totally different to the last; if you took out the character of Zool, you'd think that you were playing something entirely different on each level.

Zool is a definite must for any serious gamesplayer. It's not often something like this appears, so snap it up before it's too late!

STEVE

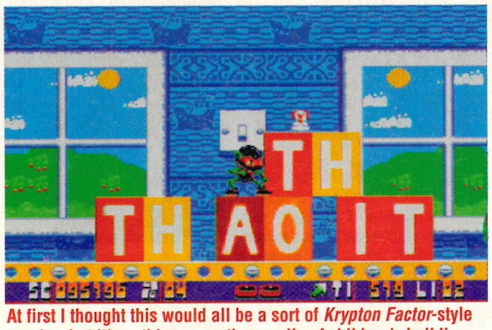
The liittle Z right next to Zool indicates that he has found a mate. It is in fact Zool's mate Zooz (I think it's his girlfriend). Anyway she will hang around with Zool until he gets hit by something. When you hit this item Zool will turn into two aliens so the opportunity arises to have double of everything charging at the oncoming unpleasantness that you are just about to witness.

Zool hanging on for dear life: in this fabulous world of electrical goods, Zool must avoid being hit by flying compact discs. When he reaches the end of this wire he has to jump down onto the platform below and to the left; the trouble with these is that give way under any pressure. As soon as you land, jump to the left again and you should land on a more stable platform.

This picture taken from the highly psychedelic toy world shows Zool doing his best Spiderman impression. I hope he's noticed the tank at the top though.

1. This is the indication of your score. As you can see, you are not doing that badly, the points are coming thick and fast now, so don't lose them.
2. With your energy virtually nonexistent, the reading from this (05%) shows you that just one more hit will result in certain death.
3. Indicating the amount of tries you have used. Zool only has a maximum of five continues, so try not to use up too many on your merry journey.
4. If Zool doesn't complete the level in a set dimension, he'll never be allowed to return to the Nth dimension, so hurry — we can't let him go homesick.
5. This show you what life you're on. In this picture, you're down to the last life. However, you still have a continue up your sleeve.

It's worth hitting the restart point before you do anything else on this section. If you do get hit by the fire or any other dangerous obstacles, on dying you'll at least return to the point where you hit the button, which in this case was here.



At first I thought this would all be a sort of *Krypton Factor*-style puzzler, but it's nothing more than a pile of children's building blocks. This is just some of the scenery in toy world, where there are some surprises in store for our alien hero.

Surrounded by sweets, Zool ponders for a moment to contemplate which he should devour next. The restart point to the left hasn't been hit — it hasn't gone green.

ZOOL ANTICS

Listed below are all the various moves which this canny alien can perform — I bet he was part of the alien olympics on Mars.

CLINGING
Using his special alien feet and hands, Zool can cling and climb on any surface he so desires. He can even climb up sheer cliff faces by jumping up a bit at a time.

HANGING
Zool often needs to hang onto things in order to reach difficult or inaccessible places. Just move the direction and Zool will move accordingly, don't press jump or he'll fall off.

JUMPING
By far Zool's best asset, he can jump long distances and great heights. This is very useful when he is faced with tricky situations when the only option is to take a leap into darkness.

KICKING
A useful skill for this little guy. This is more of a slide move than an actual kick. Quite often you'll see spikes hanging down: the only way to get past these is by this method.

MAGIC
Not very often that this actually happens, but when it does Zool will be protected against all the evils he has to face. Make the most of it when it happens and progress far.

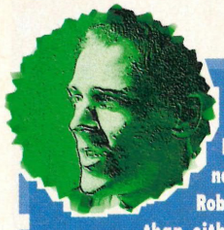
RUNNING
Comparable to the legend of the speed freaks, Zool is one hell of a fast runner. However, it's very rare he gets to show his true speed as there's normally something in the way.

FIRING
Along with jumping Zool's other great asset in his journey. This will come into effect all the way through the game — use it to blast everything you can't jump over or avoid.

SLIDING
It's great fun to watch Zool slide down hills at great speed. Not a great deal of use but often a good way of avoiding all the dangers that he would face if he was standing up straight.

Riding on a green platform with a spitting bubble creature opposite, Zool must get ready to jump. He can fire to get rid of this nasty or alternatively just jump over it.

SPINNING
When Zool goes into a spin, he really gets some distance. If there's a long jump ahead, give Zool a runup and as he jumps send him into a spin: this will give you maximum distance.



Who cares if this was ground-breaking on the Amiga, to Mega Drive owners this will look nothing more than a cross between RoboCod and Sonic – and not better than either of them. I was under the impression that Zool was a terrifically fast game, but this is nothing special, especially considering the simplicity of the scroll and the small sprites that have to be moved around.

The first levels are incredibly tedious. Perhaps it's been designed to ease you into the game, but it does nothing more than bore you to death. The controls are crude and erratic, with the extreme inertia a real pain. On the plus side, the graphics are vivid, and certainly eye-catching – but it's nothing that hasn't already been seen in James Pond.

The trouble with converting old – albeit successful – games from other formats is that regardless of their previous acclaim, they look dated when finally on Sega. Games techniques have progressed so quickly on all formats over the past years that every recent Mega Drive game in this genre is far more polished and playable. My advice: wait to see what they do with Zool 2...

DOM

INSTANT ACCESS

REVIEW

NHL 94

Steve never was, what you would call, "competent" at NHLPA Hockey 93. In fact, even EA Hockey was beyond the sporting talents of our goofy golfer. So you can imagine his delight when NHL Hockey 94 landed on the doormat. Hell and bloody were two words that immediately sprang to mind...

With the release of *EA Hockey* back in bygone days when John Major still wore grey and England (football, cricket, etc) teams actually won matches, Electronic Arts conquered a massive UK market. Who would have thought that ice hockey, a sport that has a relatively small following in the UK, would produce one of the top-selling Mega Drive sports games.

A year later, predictably, EA unleashed *NHLPA Hockey 93*, the same basic game, but tweaked to encompass new features and stats. At the time, reviewers bemoaned that fact that it was the same game in different clothing. However, time has proved that EA made some crucial changes to the gameplay, requiring completely different tactics from the original game.

In was inevitable that EA should add a third game to the series, and in true sequel style, *NHL Hockey 94* is released in 1993 (I never have worked that one out...).

The format that has remained successful for the past two years is revitalised and updated to incorporate new features, and get rid of some old ones. As with the bulk of sports simulations now from EA, *NHL 94* utilises their Four-Way Play (see last month's Power News for more info). Now you can have two players against the computer, two against each other, or even one against two. Other goodies include manual/auto controlled goalies, a shootout game, and improved access to stats and players' ratings.

The save options within the game allow you to save the player records for each player and also to save the user standings and records. Also, for the first time in a hockey game, you can now do flip passes, which means you can flip or lob the puck over another player's head.

Des Jardins, which in French I think means the gardens has just scored a goal to take Montreal into a 1–0 lead. With only a minute and 20 seconds of the first period it looks like this match could be full of goals. Goals, like anything else in this game, come with practice. The best way still is to skate down the middle weaving from side to side; when you get close, flick the puck to the side of the goalie and there you have it, 1–0 up. There are plenty more ways to score but that's up to you to find out.

Gone, though, are the fighting sections. Most people thought they were boring interruptions anyway, so there's no loss there. Also missing is the blood that you used to get when a player was injured. Both of these omissions are a result of the direct tie-in with the National Hockey League. The real American league is trying to clean up its act: so instead of violence you now have over 70 pieces of digitised organ music. That's progress for you.

Funnily enough I was watching this programme recently, and who else should I see but the legendary Ron Barr — I did have a laugh to myself. This is new, pictures of the players: there's one for each player on each team, so that's a lot of photographs. It's a shame they didn't get a new one for Ron Barr though.

All set, and they're off... it sounds like the horse racing but is in fact the start of the hockey match. The sequences for the start are exactly the same for *94* as they were for *93*. The music is obviously different but the game is basically the same. I do feel that even though this has added improvements, some aspects could and should have been changed for *94*. EA have just about pushed the limits to how far they can go with repackaging old ideas. So fresh ones, please.

OVERALL

08

„...more stats, bigger competitions, NHL 94 is going to be jammed in my console for a long time to come

1. Here your whole squad is shown sittng down, anxious to get out onto the ice and make their mark (literally). Subs are quite important if you play with line changes turned on.

2. If any attacking player should cross the defending team's blue line before the puck, then the opposing side is awarded an offside. Of course, you only need to worry about this if you have the offsides option turned on.

3. A nice touch that was there in *EA Hockey* but sadly missing from *NHLPA* was the home team's emblem marked in the centre of the ice. *NHL 94* puts that omission right.

4. The player you are actively controlling is always denoted with a star at his feet. His squad number is also shown so you can remember which players are doing well and which are not.

5. The Sin Bin is where offending players are sent after fouling. The time they spend here depends on the severity of their indiscretion — meanwhile their team-mates must play on, one man down.

6. These are the main face-off circles and are where the game will restart if the puck is iced at any point during the game. Face-offs occur in front of the offending team's goal.

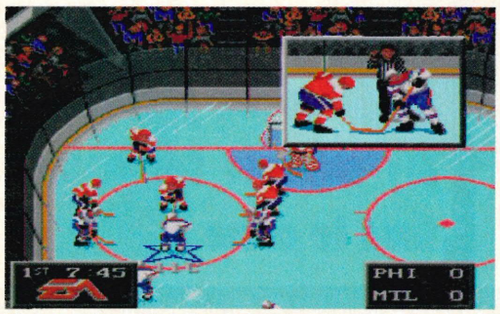
It's hard not to like NHL 94. The main problem for me was that it was very similar to NHLPA 93. If you have 93, I wouldn't recommend lashing out the extra dosh for this. However...

The game itself plays brilliantly. Additions such as the extra play-offs give more competition, as does the variety of teams and options available. The old playing style remains the same – it would be hard to improve on. The music has been improved – apparently, the actual organist from the NHL was drafted in to play for the game.

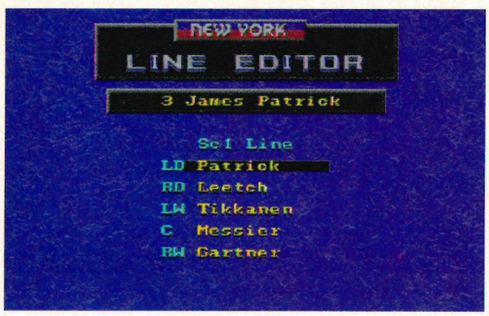
Apart from being too close to 93, NHL Hockey 94 is still a marvellous game. If you haven't got any of the series, the four-player aspect alone makes this the one to plump for.

STEVE

Chicago on the attack on this one. Detroit will have to have a strong defence to withstand the pressure that's being put on them, can they hold out?

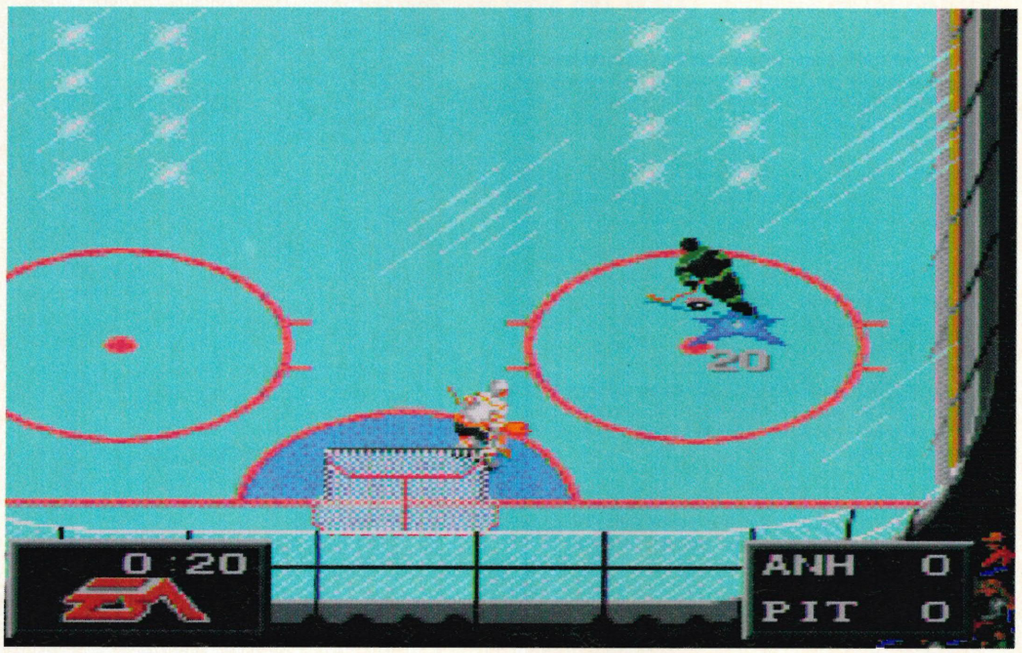


The referee has called a face-off for time wasting by the goalkeeper; fair enough really. The puck is released and it's off. It's important to win these as they will put you closer to the goal mouth, giving you more opportunity to score.



As in the first hockey games you can change the teams around so you can make up what you think is the best formation. Just go into line editor, see who has the best overall and stick them in the side. Now you have an ace team.

Another option screen showing you the overall player card ratings. Telling you their position, it also informs you of their overall rating — essential to bear in mind if you are to use the line editor, which I'm sure you will. Statistica like this are always useful, even if you find them massively boring. The more you get to play it, the more you get to know who is worth putting in the team. So eventually when it comes to using the line editor you'll have a pretty good idea of who to put in and leave out.



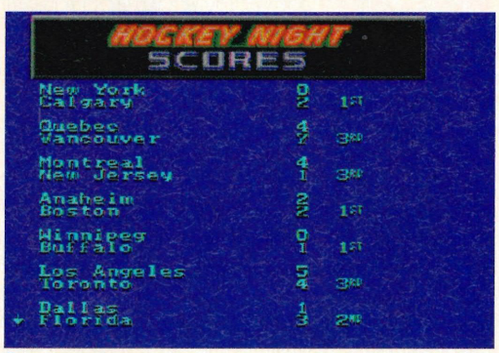
This is another added feature for the new hockey game. The teams and players take part in a series of shoot-outs, this is the hockey equivalent of penalties. If the game can't be decided by extra time then you go into a shoot-out. Basically, the teams have five shots each, you start at the half-way line and are allowed one shot at the goalie. There is also a time limit set, so if you mess about too much you'll forfeit your shot. This also gives very good practice in shooting skills as you can work out the most effective method to beat the goalie: learning this you can repeat it in actual matchplay.

I'm very wary about EA sequels. At first I usually think they're totally exploitative. But, without exception, I always seem to change to the latest version of the hockey, football or basketball game. With each new incarnation, as well as the obvious aesthetical and statistical improvements, they also add depth to the gameplay, which isn't always immediately apparent after a few days' review time.

I certainly believe all the additions to NHL 94 are improvements, especially the sound and animation. The updates, like the stats and rules, are also much appreciated. However, where EA do risk their successful format is by omitting features that were so prominent in the previous games. Specifically, there's no fighting, and, in my opinion and regardless of the reasons (which were probably political), this is, oddly, the single greatest improvement. The fights were incredibly irritating in NHLPA, and with them gone, the game flows at a perfect pace.

I'm still undecided about the gameplay. I really hated NHLPA when it first came out, but now I appreciate the finesse and skill required to master it. And while NHL 94 shooting tactics initially feel totally alien, I'm sure they will develop into more intricate moves than any of the two previous games. Only time will tell...

DOM



Extra score sheets and options were added to *NHL 94*, this being one of them. It's a basic rundown of the scores in each match and what period they were in. Information gained is by seeing which team wins the most and then deciding not to play them as they're too good — this is always the safest method.

This must bring back memories for all of those who have *NHLPA* or *EA*, the title screens haven't really changed at all apart from the background. The whole menu is self-explanatory so I can't really see any point in me sitting here and explaining what you have to do. Nothing has changed in the format of the play: you can still play for 20 minutes, have two players etc. The main difference is that you have an option on whether to choose goalies on manual or auto control; both have their advantages so it's just a matter of personal preference.

NHLPA is undoubtedly my favourite game of all-time, but having played NHL 94 I must admit that my loyalty is wavering slightly. When I first plugged into NHLPA 93, I was totally in awe of the improvements that EA had made on their successful EA Hockey title, the transformation was phenomenal. Anybody expecting a similar reaction to NHL 94 is in for quite a serious disappointment. On the surface the product's presentation is actually a lot tattier than its predecessor and it is only after giving it some serious welly that you begin to appreciate the tweaks.

As an ex-league player, I have to emphasise that this is far closer to playing the real thing than its predecessor, the improved playing animations really finish off the work that was started with EA Hockey. The players buckle over the barrier when checked, grab the puck in the air and the sprites seem slightly larger than before and a lot more solid when you charge down opposing players. The biggest improvement, though, is the use of the goal-minders; they can now come out of their nets to claim the puck and skate into space before passing it on. This is great for starting quick attacks but a real pain if you get caught out.

However, authenticity doesn't always make a product better. I still think that for the majority of people NHLPA 93 will remain a more entertaining proposition, and while I'm looking at the downside, my main moan is the ineffectiveness of slapshots. These are some of the most lethal weapons for professional players, yet in this game they hardly ever go in and are little more than set-ups for rebounds.

More organ tunes when you score, more stats, bigger competitions to play in, NHL 94 is going to be jammed in my console for a long time to come, making way only for my copy of NHLPA 93.

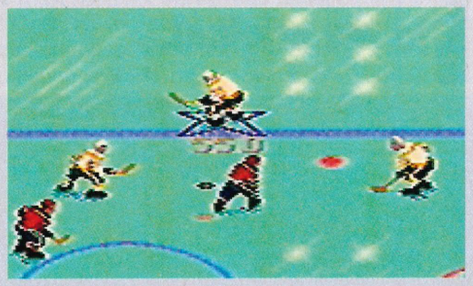
DAVE

Puck back the clock

EA HOCKEY

Released: September 1991

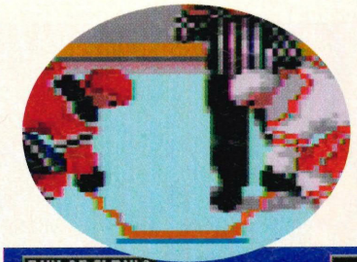
Ice hockey fans almost fainted in disbelief as this little beauty arrived on the scene. The game heralded the advent of excellent two-player sports simulations and proved beyond doubt that this was a genre for the future. The American version, *NHL Hockey*, featured American teams, but EA felt this was too much for the European audience so they renamed the game and changed all the teams to countries. Magic shot: the blue-line slapshot.



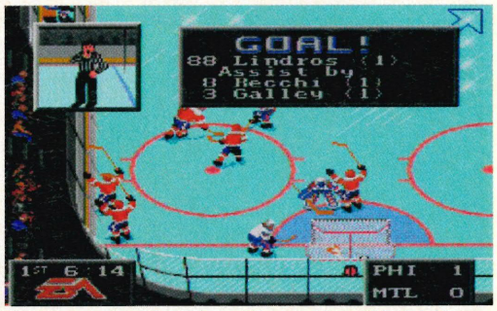
NHLPA HOCKEY 93

Released: October 1992

Revitalising the original format, *93* enabled the player to take part in the realism and brutality of the American and Canadian teams. Statistics were added so you could choose the exact formation of your teams, allowing you to pick the best players. Blood was added when a player became injured, as was more control over the fighting sequences within the game. Whereas the first game relied more on speed and power, the second was highly polished and called for more finesse in the playing. Magic shot: the Joey Deke.

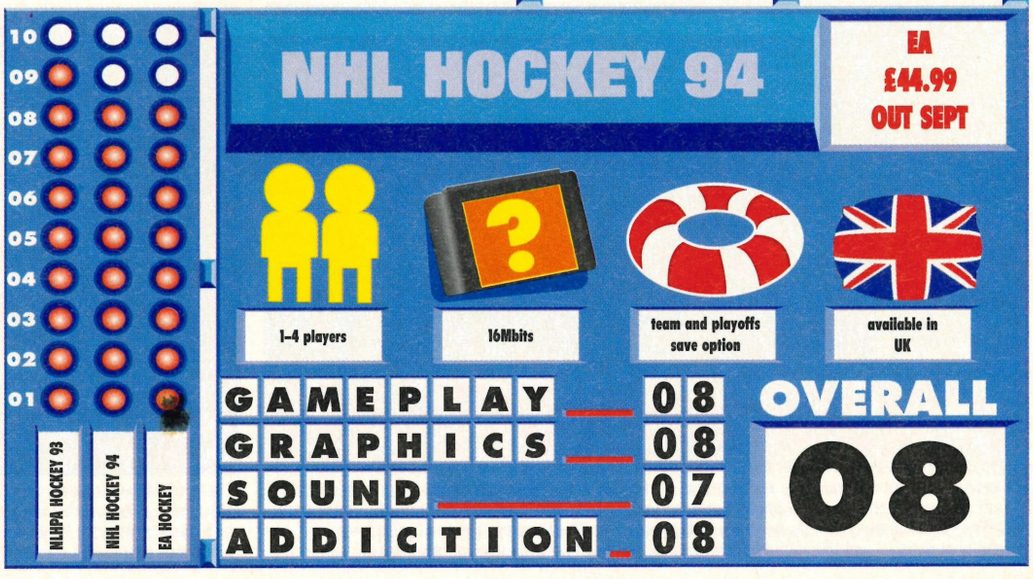


This is what it's all about: the playoffs to win the trophy, and there aren't half some teams involved. Your chosen side will be in there somewhere, showing the first opponents you will play. From there the computer will present the results of the other matches as they come in. You have to win most of your matches to stand a chance of coming through and winning this tournament. If you're good at this game, using all the experience of the previous hockey games, you probably stand a remote chance of winning; if not, switch off now!



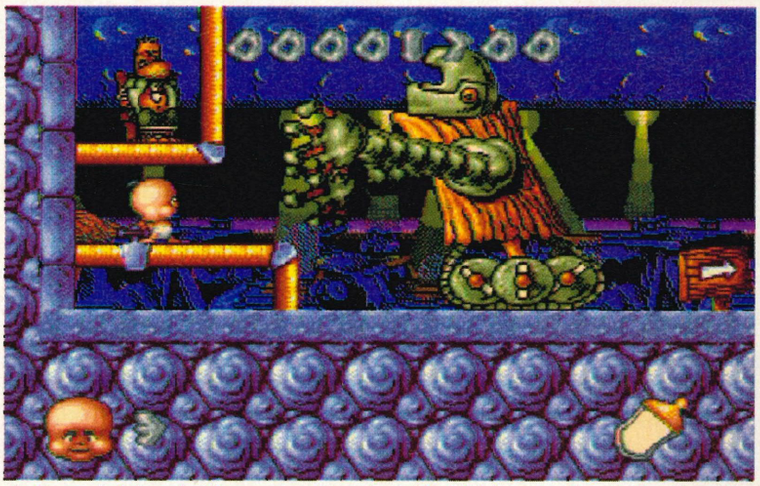
Here you see the celebrations of the team from Philadelphia on scoring the first goal. As in the real sport it's sometimes difficult to see where the puck is, so a goal is indicated by the red light flashing away. The scorer and his assistants are also named.

INSTANT ACCESS

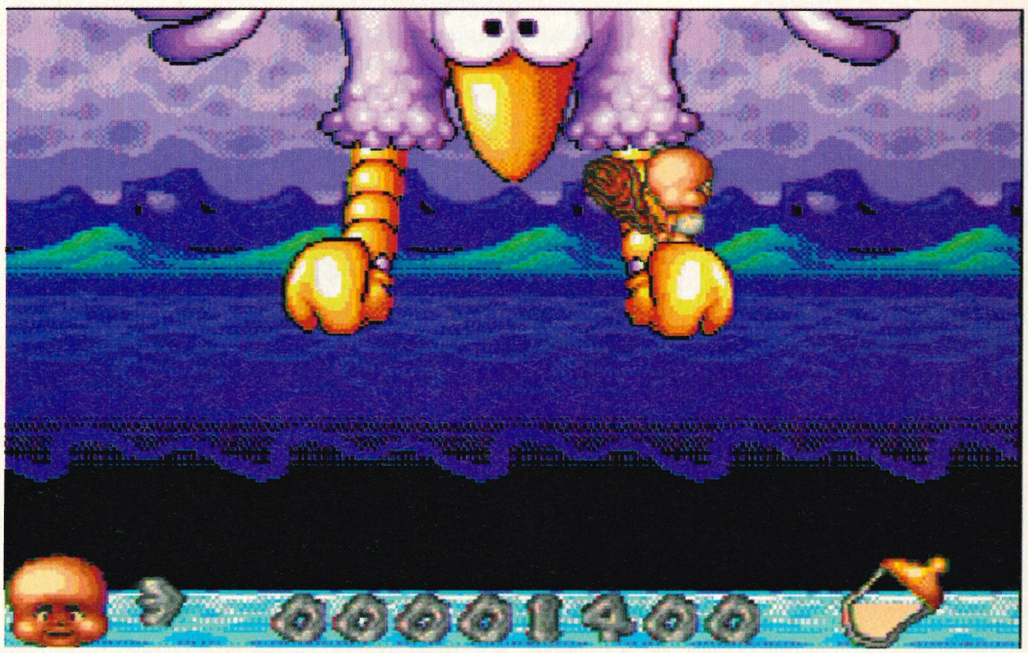


REVIEW

CHUCK ROCK 2

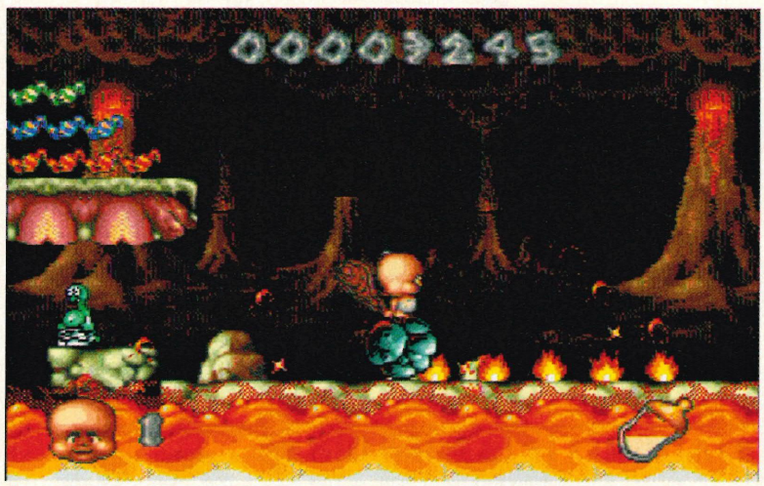


Having reached the end of the game, you're confronted by Brick Jagger's robot guardian. Poor old Chuck senior, all he can do is sit and watch as his gutsy little sprog battles it out with this mechanical monster, and it's a toughy to beat too. Several carefully placed blows to its head will soon have it spilling its cogs all over the floor.



Up, up and away! As you scrap with all manner of nasty fishes as you make your way along Dippy the Diplodocus's back, you are brought to a standstill by a giant rubber ring blocking your path. Don't worry, as if by magic a giant purple bird wings its way to your rescue. A little jump onto its claws and you have a first class flight to the other side of the dinosaur's buoyancy aid. Little bits of variety like this make *Chuck Rock 2* a highly enjoyable game to play.

Although programmed by the same team, Chuck Rock 2 seems to bear little resemblance to the original.



Lava can be a bit of a nuisance at the best of times, but when you are completely surrounded by the stuff only quick thinking and a pair of asbestos boxer shorts will keep you intact. Well, as asbestos has not yet become generally available in the stone age, Chuck Junior has to use whatever is readily at hand — and this round boulder will do just fine to plough through the flames.

That's no place for a nap, you dozy little caveman! At the end of the Dippy level there is...you guessed it, Dippy. Palaeontology would have us believe that Diplodocuses were veggies but this one seem to be more intent upon helping himself to a nice Chuck steak right now, so get and bash his bloody brains in.

Since the phenomenal success of Chuck Rock across all formats, we seem to have been kept waiting for ever for the sequel. A fan of the original, we gave stony-faced Dave Perry the dubious pleasure of child-minding for the day.

2 CHUCK ROCK

Chuck's come a long way since he was first introduced to the gamesplaying world. Flushed by his success in defeating Gary Gritter it seems that our intrepid rock-dweller's ambitions knew no bounds. He invented a car, the Rock-et, and became a high-flying businessman controlling his own company. Financial security, a beautiful wife, and when Chuck also became a dad he must have felt his life was perfect. But the trouble with having everything is that there is always someone else who wants it too. In this case that someone is Brick Jagger, owner of Chuck Motors' number one rival Datstone Cars. In an attempt to get Ophelia to sign the business over to him, Jagger kidnaps her loving husband and threatens the worst. Heartbroken and distraught it seems she has no choice, until their gutsy sprog breaks out of his play pen and vows not to return until he has rescued his rotund father. And so the adventure begins...

Chuck Rock 2 is an enormous game in which you must battle your way through six completely different levels and rescue Chuck from the clutches of Brick Jagger. You control Chuck Junior and armed with your trusty club you must face all manner of prehistoric nasties. However, your club is not the crude weapon that it may at first seem. You can stand on it to avoid creatures and objects, set traps off with it, move blocks with it, and even set it on fire to light darkened caverns or scare away monsters. A lot more useful than the old Chuck belly-butt.

As the whole look of the game is completely different, you may be surprised to find that Chuck Rock 2 was designed by the same team that brought you the original game. Core Design claim that this is because it is a complete re-write and, in fact, technically superior to its predecessor. It is certainly larger and far more demanding. Your three initial lives seem excessive as you cruise through the first few zones but the difficulty curve soon lunges upwards providing increasingly tougher challenges and increasingly tougher bosses. These guardians are huge and take an extraordinary amount of guile and violence to disperse of, and, whilst their strangely cartoonistic appearance owes more to The Flintstones than the Jurassic period, some show incredible amounts of artificial intelligence, actually countering your moves before you make them.

The most noticeable difference between this and the original game is the vast number of puzzles that need solving if you are going to progress towards Jagger's stronghold. Tempting monkeys with bananas, riding ostriches, even getting spat out by giant Venus flytraps to reach higher platforms, all take time to suss out and all add to the richness of the gameplay.

Another quality horizontal scroller from Core, Chuck Rock 2 – Son of Chuck may surprise many people but whether it will live up to the reputation set by Chuck Rock senior... only time will tell.

OVERALL 07

Chuck Rock was a highly original game, and sometimes it's better to leave games that way. Sequels often don't work, and the same problems that have afflicted Golden Axe II et al have happened to Chuck Rock 2. The plot has remained the same apart from a few new characters. Chuck's son's moves are no further developed than the original belly-butt and the gameplay has remained very similar.

Admittedly, there are some neat graphics and lateral puzzles, but the music is ordinary and the gameplay tiresome. The resemblance to Chuck Rock is too diluted for this game to work successfully.

STEVE

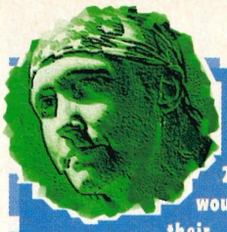
When Chuck ruled the earth... Chuck Rock

Released: September 1992

What an excellent idea *Chuck Rock* was. The console industry is flooded with horizontal scrollers but this oozed personality and humour. From Chuck's comical belly-butt to dodging giant dino-turds, this game was as enjoyable as it was addictive. The added element of strategy and puzzle-solving that more often than not involved the skilful manipulation of a large rock, made this game simple to play but difficult to put down.

Pretty, pretty. In Butterfly Grove it really does seem as if life is idyllic. Lovely flowers, lots of greenery and of course butterflies everywhere. Wrong! A lot of the plants have designs upon Chuck Junior's well-being and there are numerous pesky monkeys who take great pleasure in lobbing things at you. However, lure them out of the trees with bananas and introduce them to Mr Club.

That's the way to deal with rude builders: a club administered to the underside of the jaw is always a powerfully persuasive argument. At Brick Jagger's car plant there are plenty of these cronies lurking about trying to stop you from saving your dear old dad. There are also pipes belching out hot steam and pools of toxic waste so be careful how you tread.



Before I start picking faults I want to point out that I thoroughly enjoyed Chuck Rock 2. This is a huge platformer that would give anybody calluses on their thumbs, however I was disappointed with the product as a whole in relation to its predecessor.

Although it's been programmed by the same team behind the successful Chuck Rock games, Chuck Rock 2 seems to bear little resemblance to the original. Everything about the graphics has been stylized heavily to the point of removing most of the identity that the first Chuck Rock had struggled so hard to establish. The main sprite is very poorly defined and possesses very little charm; the dinosaurs that appear throughout the game are far less finished than in the original, seemingly constructed from numerous 3-D spheres which very often don't even fit together properly. In fairness they do provide formidable adversaries and the general level of gameplay is very high, but they don't look like real dinosaurs, they just look silly. It bugs me a bit that when companies change a sequel this much they don't just release it as a new title in its own right.

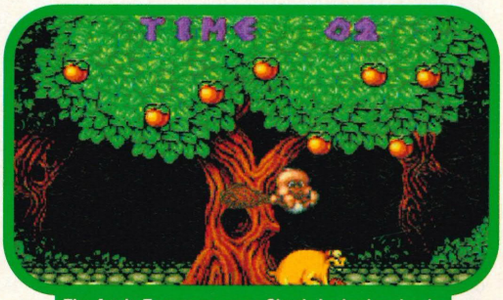
The sound in this game is even more annoying than the daffy monsters. Where is the thumping track that accompanied Chuck? Where are the catchy hook lines like "onga bonga"?

The overall feel is that of an overdeveloped product. Maybe a little too much time was spent rethinking too many things. As a new console release, this is a very challenging game, a very good game. It possesses enough surprises to keep you coming back for more. However, as Chuck Rock 2, this doesn't quite cut it.

DAVE

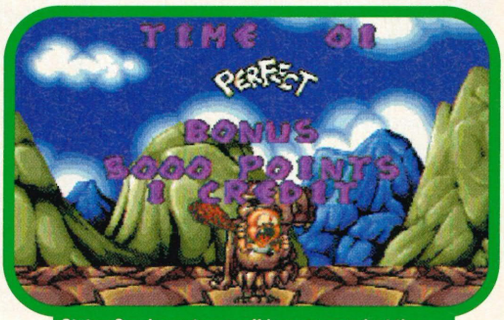
READY, STEADY, GO!

As you make your way through Chuck Rock 2 you are given a number of opportunities to boost your score in bonus sub-games. Here are three that you'll have to play.

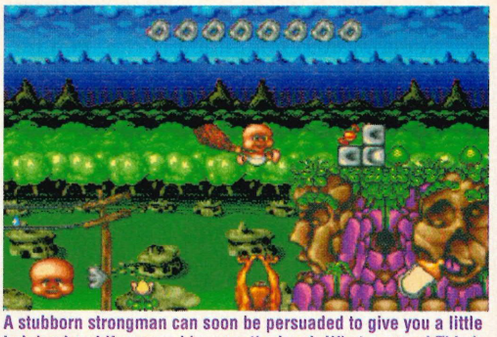


The Apple Tree game sees Chuck Junior leaping in an attempt to knock fruit from the branches of the tree. Use the friendly dinosaur as a springboard.

The Boat Race pits little Chuck against two prehistoric competitors in a stone-age version of Oxford versus Cambridge. On your marks...



Statue Carving sets you off in a race against time to carve a statue of your dad out of a large lump of rock. Blast that slab with your club.



A stubborn strongman can soon be persuaded to give you a little helping hand if you rap him over the head. What a pussy! This is a very useful tactic for reaching those higher unattainable ledges and on other levels the same principle applies to large statues and venus flytraps.

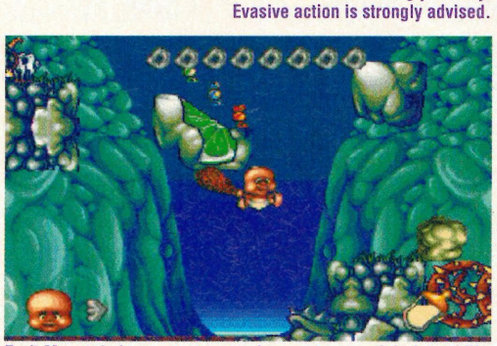
Average. Straight down the middle of the road platform mediocrity at its finest. Looking through Core Design's previous releases, they are all supercharged games of old genres like the innovative arcade RPGs Corporation and Heimdall or the neat arcade adventures Chuck Rock and Wonder Dog or even Jaguar XJ220, the monotonous CD driving sim. And while most of these games have been well received, even Core can't deny the fact that there's little real originality in them.

I really liked Chuck Rock, and felt the humour was spot on, but Son of Chuck is way off mark. There's no atmosphere and the links to the original Chuck Rock are tenuous. Personally, I'm a bit sick and tired of the constant drivel of arcade adventurers that have cropped up recently. It's sad that the Japs always used to come to us Brits for innovative games, but now we just seem to keep cloning the games we came up with ages ago.

Anyway, Son of Chuck has all the usual pretty graphics and pleasant sound you'd expect, so I've no doubt it'll sell loads. And that's just the reason why Core keep producing these games – because people keep buying them – but in the long-term it means games development is being held back. If Chuck Rock 2's just what you expected, what's the point buying it?

DOM

Fleeing cave dwellers usually means that a large dinosaur is coming your way. Evasive action is strongly advised.

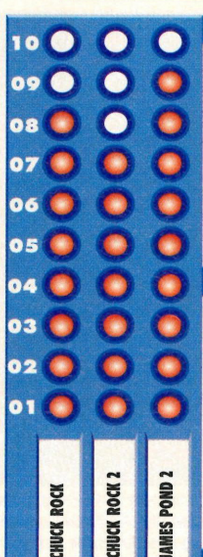


Fruit Mountain is a very strange place: not a gay club, but a hilly region of the game that seems to be decorated with a variety of giant pieces of fruit. Throughout the game the backgrounds and worlds are quite beautiful but not exactly prehistoric, more fairytale really.

INSTANT ACCESS

CHUCK ROCK 2

CORE DESIGN
£39.99
OUT SEPT



one player

4Mbit

no saves

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GAMEPLAY	07
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OVERALL

07

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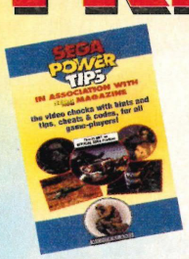

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REVIEW

jurassic PARK

The monster movie of the year finally arrives on the Mega Drive. Will it top the charts like its movie mentor or is it condemned to extinction the minute it hits the streets? Dave Perry takes a danger-filled ride through Jurassic Park.

It seems to have taken 360 million years, but now it's here, this is a game with bite.

Rich millionaire John Hammond has genetically masterminded the return of a bygone age, the age of the dinosaur. By obtaining prehistoric DNA from blood held within the fossilised bodies of a mosquitoes, Hammond and his team of leading geneticists have managed to resurrect many of the previously extinct monsters from the Jurassic period. These cold-blooded giants were to be kept in an enormous, futuristic zoo called Jurassic Park as the world's greatest tourist attraction. However, following a power failure on the island where the park is based, the dinosaurs have now burst out of their electrified cages and are roaming the island, raining terror upon all who cross their paths. As brave palaeontologist Alan Grant, it is your mission to find your way past these marauding reptiles and call the mainland for help.

Jurassic Park is a sprawling platform adventure, very much in the mould of Delphine's *Flashback*. Filled with beautiful animation and piercing sound this is one of those games that, if you are not careful, you end up watching rather than playing. Positively seething with atmosphere you must carefully leap, climb, shoot and fight your way through seven levels of flesh-ripping and puzzle-solving before finally calling for help... but the fun doesn't stop there. Should you successfully manage to guide the surprisingly agile Alan Grant through to the end of the game, you can go and do it all again, this time from a dinosaur's viewpoint.

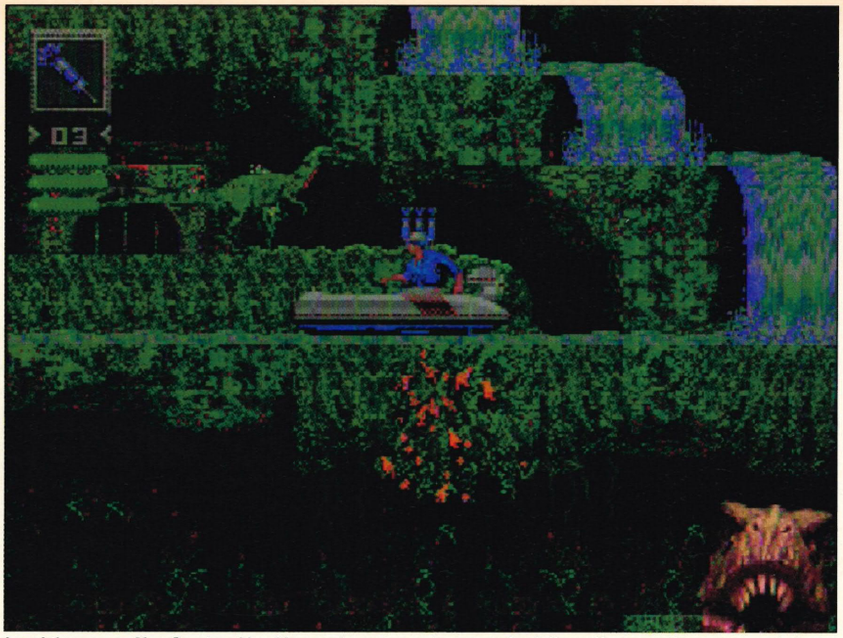
Sega have added a cunning twist to the gameplay by giving you the initial choice of playing either as Alan Grant trying to save himself and humanity, or a vicious velociraptor trying to escape his island prison. This innovative idea means that really you are getting two games for the price of one! Both are suitably varied, challenging and most importantly provide a whole new set of problems to be overcome.

All the reptilian stars of the movie make regular appearances, some more frequently than others, and the game pretty much follows the film's storyline, albeit somewhat loosely. It's interesting to see that the concerned Dr Grant never actually kills any of the dinosaurs, he only stuns them, causing them to fall into a deep sleep. These lofty moral values are slightly alien to the velociraptor, of course, and he has no hesitation in slashing the throats of his victims or eating the smaller animals that are stupid enough to get in his way.

I don't think *Jurassic Park* fans will be disappointed with this game. It's a veritable monster fest and something that dinosaur nuts like myself have been waiting for for a long, long time. It's just a shame I couldn't play the Tyrannosaurus Rex...

This map clearly displays the opening section of the game, and I have added a few little annotated explanations of some of the items you'll come across in Jurassic Park.

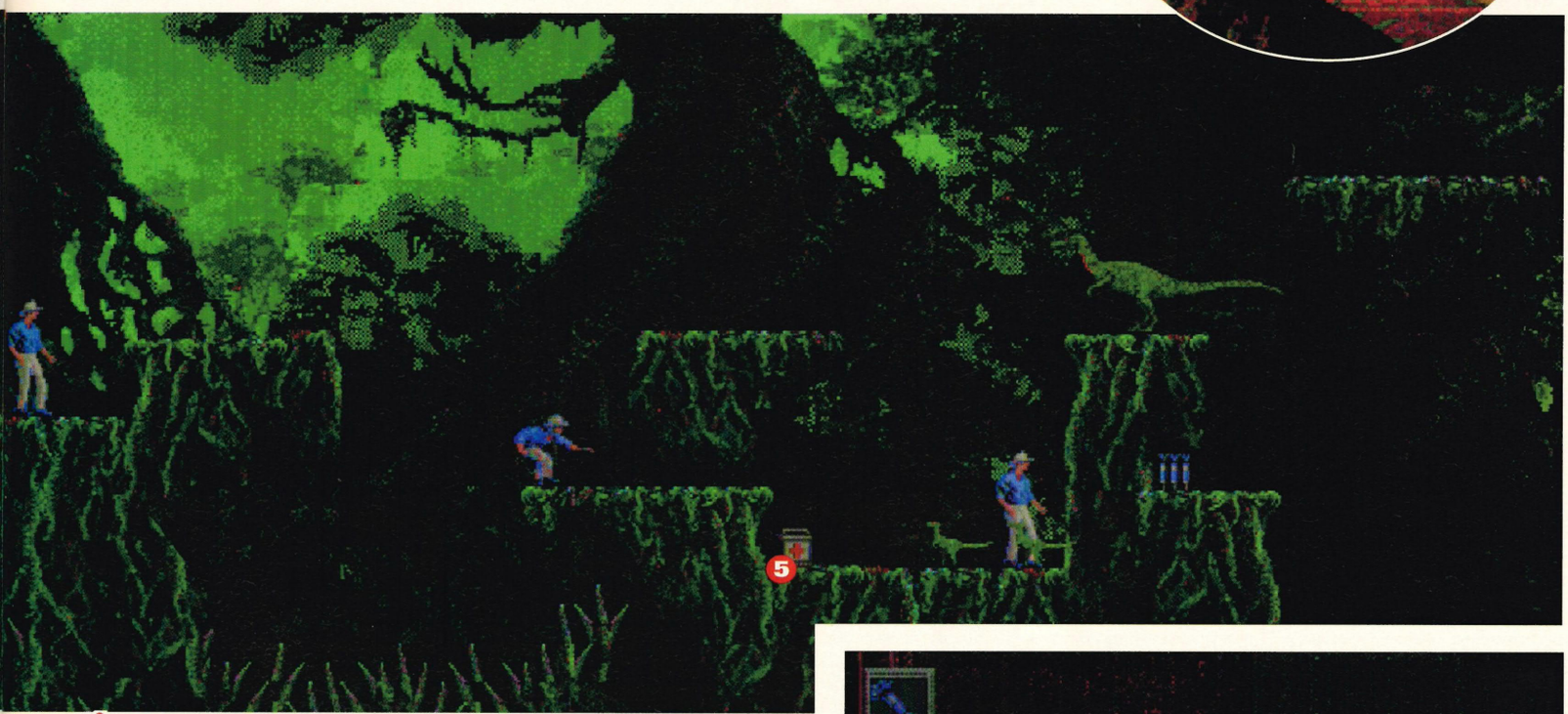
1. The box to the top left of the screen when you are playing as Alan Grant, always displays your presently selected weapon. Here it is a tranquiliser dart, the most common pick-up available within the game.
2. These three bars represent your life force. Each one is an individual life and the bottom one will slowly decrease as you get laid into by the various dinosaurs who are looking for your blood.
3. As you wander about you'll find useful objects helpfully scattered all over the place. These particular pick-ups are blue tranquiliser darts, very useful. It's always advisable to collect objects whenever you can.
4. Another pick-up for you, this time it's gas bombs. These are a good weapon but a bit cumbersome to use. Grab them and use them mainly for throwing down onto waiting dinosaurs on lower levels.
5. These medical kits are probably the most important things you'll find in Jurassic Park. Picking them up will revitalise your energy and can be a real life saver. Keep your eyes peeled as there are not too many of these scattered about.

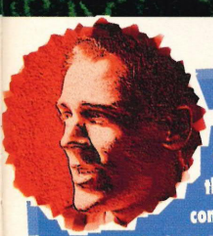


Level three sees Alan Grant making his way downstream in a motorised dingy. However, the motor needs fuel and to collect it he must leave the relative safety of his craft and face the numerous dinosaurs who are none too pleased at his being there. This stage goes on a bit and can become extremely frustrating after a while, but perseverence and a quick trigger finger should see most good gamesplayers through. Failure could mean an early lunch for the Tyrannosaurus in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen.

OVERALL

08



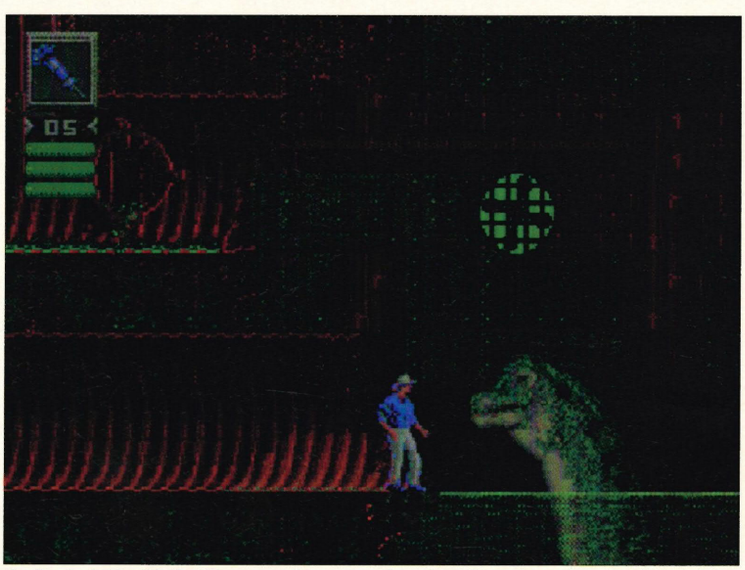


At the end of the day, who cares if this is a movie licence, and what the film was like, and how accurate the translation is; at the end of the day, this makes no difference to the fact that there are better games around in this much-used movie licence platform genre. Before anyone even attempted converting Jurassic, I would have bet £100 on it being a platform game. Just look at the movie licence history: Batman, Batman Returns, RoboCop, Terminator, Alien 3, The Addams Family... all of them turned into platformers. Jurassic Park, the movie, was practically filmed in stages (the control room, the jeep driving, the end fight in the centre, etc), so why such an unoriginal conversion? It had the scope for so much more.

Yes, Jurassic Park is good, but Flashback was great. The first stage is a cheap-looking Flashback clone, with a grim green background and infuriating speed up/slow down of the screen scrolling. The saving element is the raptor stages. The big guy is a pain to control initially, but after a while I soon enjoyed throwing his lumbering form around the place. Obviously, this is in complete contrast to the film, but this innovative twist certainly makes up for the predictable Grant stages.

If you're a complete dinophile, you'll love the whole game environment – but remember, there are better alternatives to this type of game.

DOM



Docile giants like this Brachiosaurus often appear throughout the game to give you a little helping hand, or head in this case. Alan Grant can leap on to this towering herbivore's head and use him as a welcome stepping stone to get over this watery gap in the sewer stage. How on earth a creature as large and heavy as this ever got into a sewer is a complete mystery, but luckily he's your friend so it would be rude to ask such personal questions.

JURASSIC PARK

Since its release in July Jurassic Park has filled the cinema the world over and looks set to become the biggest grossing movie of all time.

Directed by Steven Spielberg and utilising some fantastic computer special effects, courtesy of Industrial Light and Magic, the movie has certainly come closer to bringing dinosaurs to life on the big screen then any other film to date.

With the screenplay co-written by author Micheal Crichton Jurassic Park is the year's must-see movie. If you haven't seen it yet...get a life!

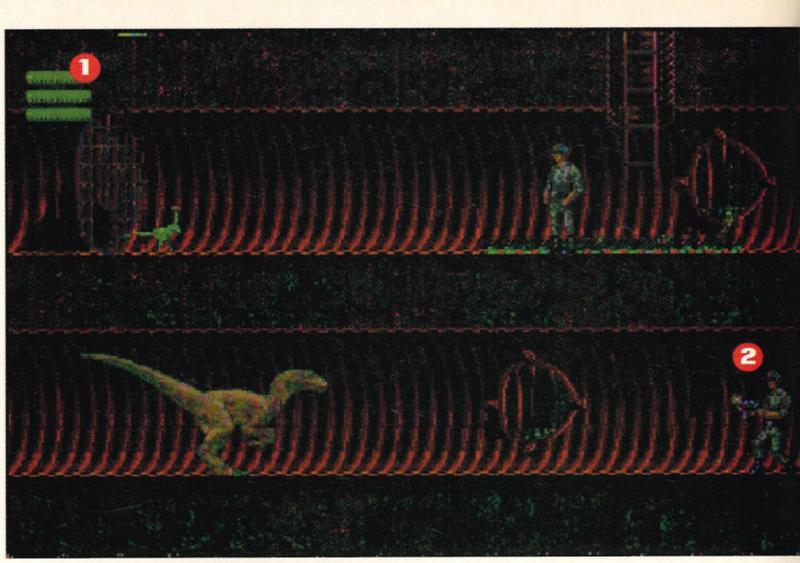
Movie licences. Most of them should come with a health warning. It seems that every time some film studio begins work on a new blockbuster, some software publisher has already signed up the rights and is instantly delving through its archives for some tried and tested formula that it can regurgitate.

That said though, Jurassic Park is a great game. Beautiful to look at, challenging to play, this lush platformer is much better than competitors like Alien 3 or Terminator but lacks the vital spark of originality that made Flashback such a great product. It seems to have taken 360 million years to have reached the shelves but now it's here, this is a game with bite.

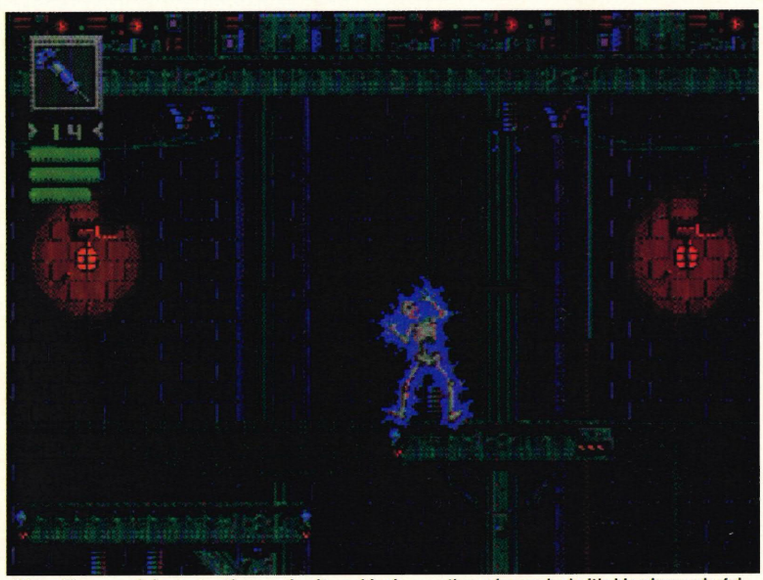
It's a shame, however, that there are no surprising new dinosaurs in the game, or any little sub-missions, like rescuing children etc. It seems very short-sighted to have just included the dinosaurs featured in the movie, or maybe it's just lazy. Perhaps a bit more research into the Jurassic period wouldn't have gone a miss as it does become monotonous shooting wave after wave of velociraptor, and meeting the same inept triceratops level after level. Come to think about it, how did the triceratops get onto those platforms anyway?

That said, the creatures that do appear in the game are animated brilliantly and the accompanying screams and cries add a real edge to the ensuing confrontations. A few dodgy bugs here and there, like invisible platforms, spoil what could have been a classy product but this is a game that will certainly hold a towering position in my games collection. Check it out!

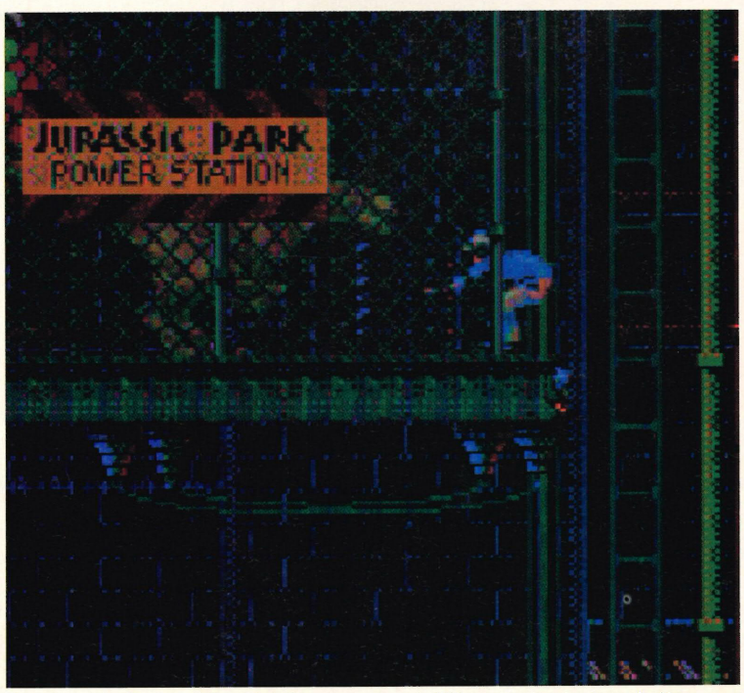
DAVE



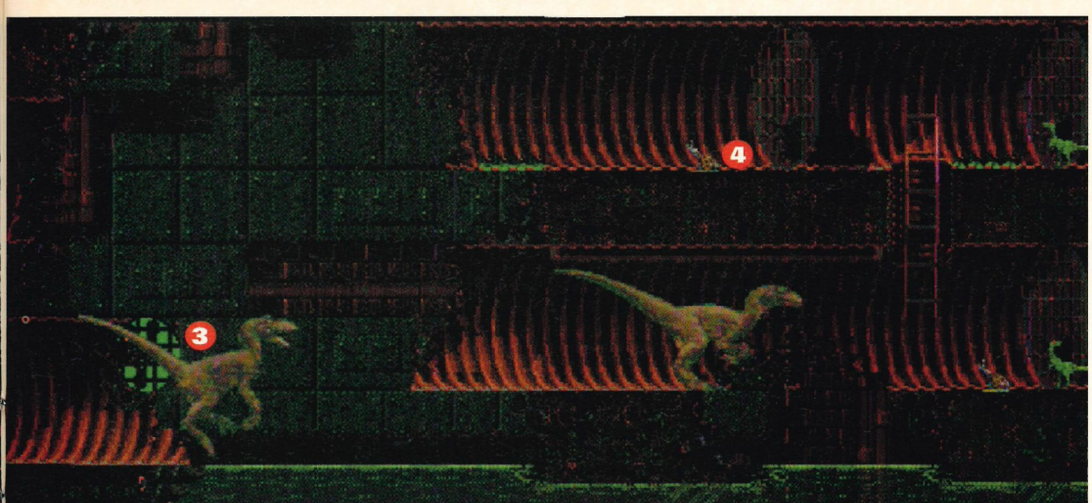
Stun the dinosaur with only one dart left, leap out of the boat and collect the fuel. Try to get back in before he wakes up or some of his mates come looking for him and end up giving you a hard time. Fuel cans are essential for level three. If you miss them you will almost certainly run out at some point and be at the mercy of the marauding monsters.



"Yipes!" you exclaim as ten thousand volts suddenly race through your body.It's bloody wonderful isn't it? You dash about dodging Raptors, scaling gigantic platforms and swinging across ravines then you go and run into an electric conductor and quick as a flash you've fried your brains. This must be the dinosaur equivilant of a kebab I suppose.



"Here boy, nice Raptor..." Smooth-talking your way out of this one isn't going to work. Alan Grant has disturbed a hungry Velociraptor whilst wandering around the power station in level two. The only way past these speedy and agile creatures is to pump them full of tranquiliser, before they rip out your entrails.



Let me take you on a brief tour of the sewers in level four from a Raptor's eye view. The greatest feature of Jurassic Park is how the game changes depending upon the character chosen.

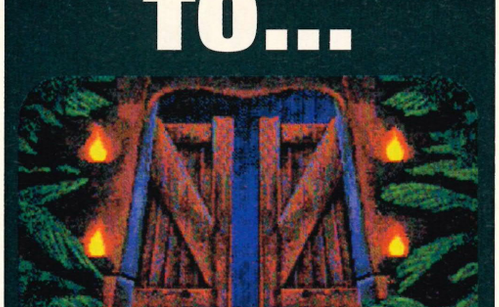
1. First thing you'll notice as a Raptor is that you only have your life bars in the top-left corner of the scrren. This is because you do not have any weapons and quite frankly you don't need them. You're a killing machine.

2. All these park emplyees are out to get you. They're usually armed with electric-shock guns and are quite slow to react. No problem for you, a single leap and you'll be ripping out their intestines.

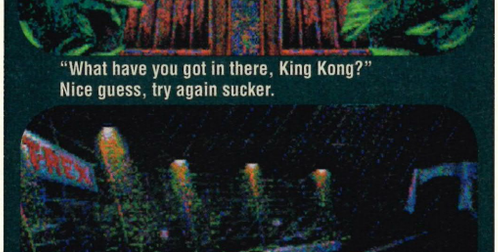
3. Talking of leaping, your new-found dinosaur form bestows upon you the ability to leap to unfeasibly large heights. Gaps that would have been previously untraversable to Alan Grant are just a skip to you.

4. The problem with having all this speed and size is that you get very, very hungry. Luckily there are chicken drumsticks just left lying around for you to eat. These act like Grant's medical kits and restore energy.

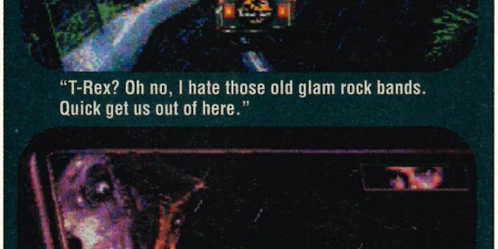
WELCOME TO...



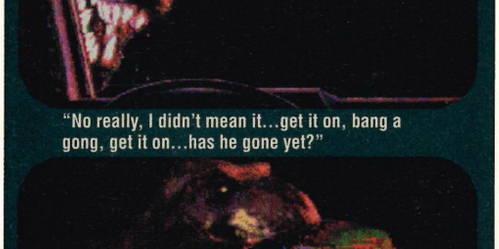
"What have you got in there, King Kong?"
Nice guess, try again sucker.



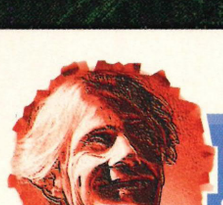
"T-Rex? Oh no, I hate those old glam rock bands. Quick get us out of here."



"No really, I didn't mean it...get it on, bang a gong, get it on...has he gone yet?"



"You and your big mouth!"
"My big mouth? Take a look out of your window honey!"



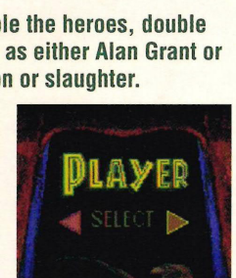
You've seen the film, read the book, now play the game. Surprisingly, the game is actually very good. I was preparing myself for an absolute pile of exploitative rubbish, but this should sell on the content of the game, not just the name on the box.

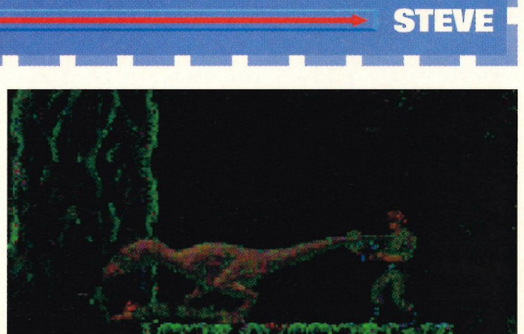
The style of graphics and movement of characters is very similar to Flashback, but not quite as polished. The music is also quite decent, which is as rare as dinosaurs nowadays. The quality aspect of this game is the gameplay. It's really difficult and challenging, showing that this hasn't been a rushed licence. If you loved the film, then I've a strong feeling you'll love this.

STEVE

THE RAPTOR OPTION

Take your choice. Double the heroes, double the fun. Choose to play as either Alan Grant or the Raptor, conservation or slaughter.





If you choose to play as the Raptor, you'll find a lot of differences in the game. For a start, both humans and dinosaurs are trying to stop you. Push the B button and rip their throats out. Nice.

INSTANT ACCESS

JURASSIC PARK

SEGA
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one player

16Mbit

level passwords

available in UK

GAMEPLAY	08
GRAPHICS	07
SOUND	08
ADDICTION	07

OVERALL 08

10 09 08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01

ALIEN 3 | JURASSIC PARK | FLASHBACK

REVIEW

super baseball 2020

Steve Bough spent over four years in the future playing baseball for the American Eagles. Having been dropped from the side for insubordination – you won't notice him in the game – he's sold his soul to journalism, and is now the one in the crowd with the notepad, popcorn and press pass for MEGA POWER...

> **...baseball, at the best of times, can be a pretty boring game**

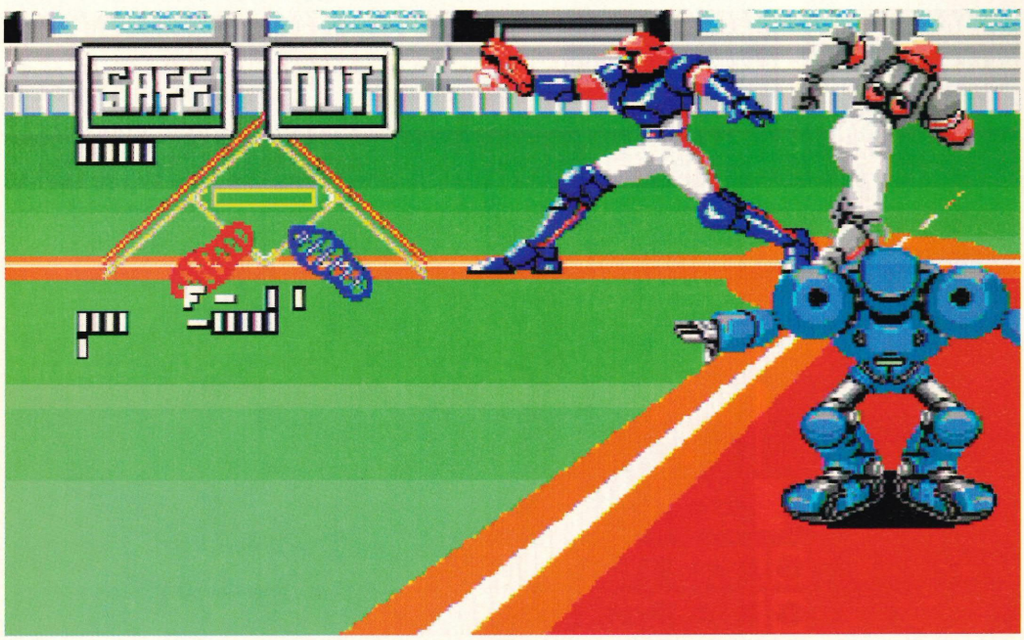
Always pushing the limits of computer game technology, EA have thrown a completely new look over the conventional baseball game. *Super Baseball 2020* is set in the future with the emphasis on twists and new rules. Originally an arcade game on the Neo•Geo format, the new conversion has retained most of the coin-op's features and squeezed into a 16Mbit cartridge.

With EA often being accused of updating old games, it comes as a refreshing change to find something totally untried by them. The game format remains the same as traditional baseball, with a fielding side with a pitcher, and a batting side with hitters. Visually, there are numerous changes to take the game 30 years into the future. Human sides play alongside robots, the ref's an android and land mines litter the play field.

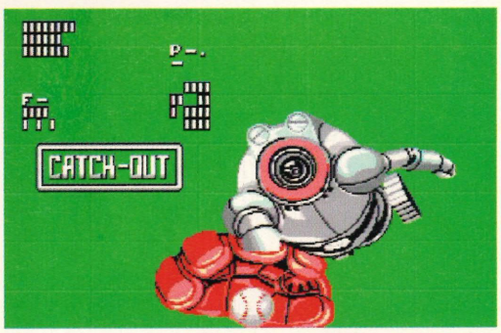
The game has a total of 12 teams that play in two leagues, the fighting league and the exciting league. Differences between the two are that in the exciting league you get the land mines; the excitement coming from watching the fielders explode in the air. Also, with the power-ups that you'll receive, the players get stronger. In the fighting league, on receiving their power-ups, the players become more aggressive. There is no actual fighting involved, but the tension level certainly increases.

Each of the 12 teams has their own characteristics, with hard hitters, fast runners and very good fielders and catchers. You can strengthen your team by winning prize money for good play. This means the more runs and home runs you make, the more money you'll win – and in turn your team will become unstoppable. The money won goes towards improving your batters and pitchers. If you start to play badly, this will reduce your prize money.

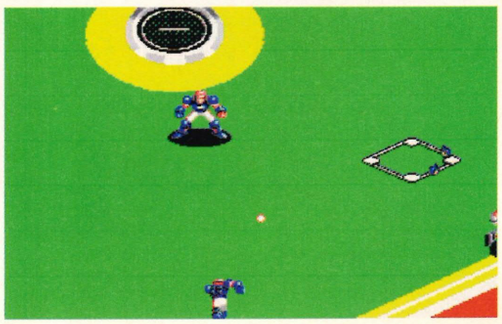
There's no greater incentive than money, and with the futuristic overtones, EA hope to have included everything that will make this baseball game attractive to fans and non-fans alike.

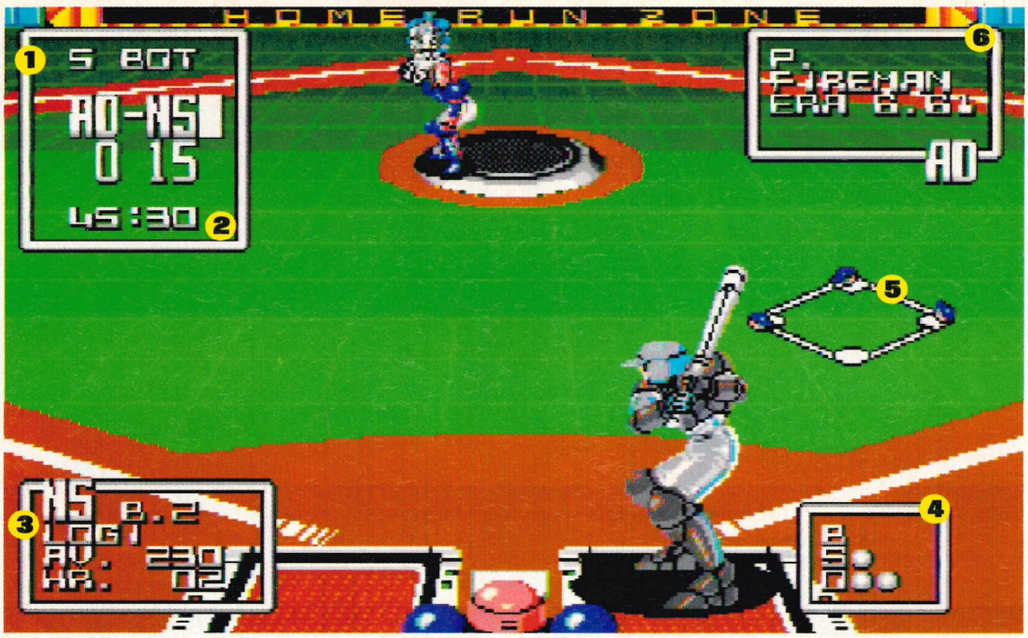


In, out, shake it all about, this is the close-up shot you get when the player is rushing towards the base. The fielder has thrown the ball to the man on the base: he's caught it but is the batsmam out? Well, I can tell you on this occasion he was given out which is a bit unfair as I was the batsman — oh well never mind it's only a game. The robot character on screen is the umpire so I don't trust his decision anyway, after all what does he know about baseball?



The thing about these robots is that they're to darn clever, thsi one has just caught me out with a magnificent catch. You think it's going safe and this is what you get.





"A picture paints a thousand words" Whoever said that rubbish, well, here's a big picture for you to work out what does what on the main screen for Super Baseball

1. This shows you the pitcher and his speed. Some of the pitchers are really fast, but slow down as the game progresses. The robots eventually explode when they can take no more, and I thought they could go on.

2. This indicates the time that the game has been playing. With penalties for wasting time, the umpire can enforce strict punishment to teams doing this or behaving badly in front of a large crowd.

3. These figures indicate the batsman's average. Looking at this he seems pretty good at what he does for a living. With two home runs already to his credit and over 230 main runs he's a really useful batsman.

4. These show the types of pitch or hit that either have fouled on. A ball is called when a pitch is deemed unplayable, a strike is when the batsman goes to hit and misses, and the other is a foul when it's hit behind.

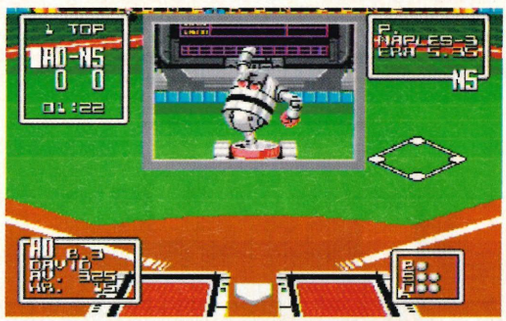
5. This shows you a brief glimpse of who is located where on the diamond. To get round this in one go is very difficult, so it's wise to familiarise yourself with staying safe and making sure the runs still come.

6. This is another statistic featuring the pitcher, this time the amount of balls he has thrown and the rate and speed at which he has been playing them. He better slow down or at this rate he'll burn himself out.

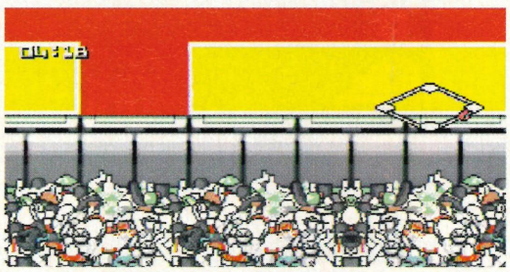
Super Baseball 2020 is innovative and cracking good fun. It takes a little while to get into, but stick it on the two-player mode, grab some poor sap and get playing. The graphics aren't mind blowing, neither is the music, but the gameplay lifts this game from being something ordinary. There's a lot of depth and playability within this; no two games are ever the same so it's unlikely you're going to get bored after a day's play.

If you like sports games, you'll love this.

STEVE



Two different shots here: the top picture shows the umpire calling a no-ball, and the bottom picture shows what happens when the ball goes behind for a foul.



OVERALL 06

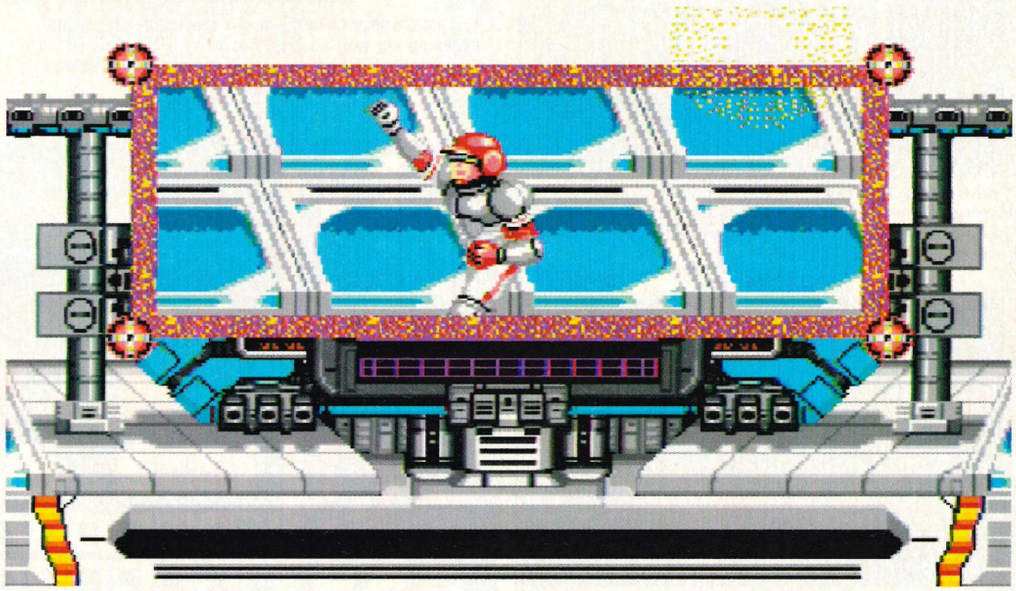
Excuse me, did I miss something, or are all these baseball games basically the same? Programmers manage to find new angles on football games, boxing games and even ice hockey games so how come every baseball game that appears – and there have been plenty – looks and plays almost exactly the same. They haven't even been very successful so why do they keep churning them out if they haven't got anything new to offer?

All right, I concede that the rules in 2020 are somewhat unorthodox and the characters available aren't exactly your conventional bunch, but that's just cosmetic. Strip away the visual differences and you have your standard behind-the-pitcher view baseball game. If you've played RBI 4 you could just pick this up and play without even checking the instruction booklet.

All that said, Baseball 2020 is a very good example of this genre. The gameplay is smooth and the players are beautifully animated. It's nice to see that when a robot pitcher starts to blow up on the main screen he is still smoking when the game cuts away to an aerial view. Little details like this make all the difference to the feel of a game.

If you don't own a baseball game and you want one then this could be for you. But if you are looking for something special to spend your money on, I would leave this cart on the shelf.

DAVE



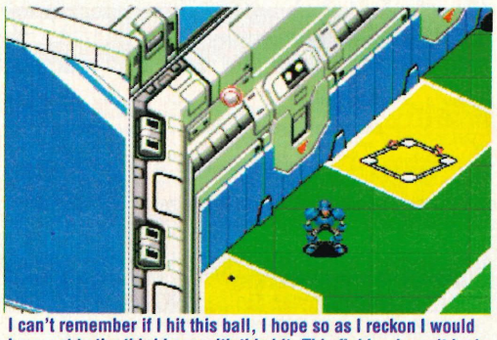
This is the futuristic scene you get when you or anybody scores a home run. Admittedly it is a bit elaborate but this is an American game. Home runs don't come very often, so I wouldn't imagine you'd see this screen that much. Touches like this have been thrown in all over Super Baseball 2020 to give it that added boost to prove that it's set in the future. In saying that, they already have these types of screens already in American baseball, imagine what they'll have in 20 years?

From the option screen comes the team selection. There are two leagues as well for the teams: the fighting league and the exciting league, both are equally as good. The teams all have their own specific defences and weaknesses.

Scared of being lumped in with the RBI and Hardball series, Electronic Arts have quite blatantly slapped a futuristic sheen on Baseball 2020. Theoretically, this is not a bad idea – because baseball, at the best of times, can be a pretty boring game – but in practice, EA have forsaken the indefinable draw of traditional baseball and simply relied upon all the futuristic elements to ignite the gameplay.

While the robotic competitors are funny and the added violence novel, I never felt as if the whole game gelled together. Essentially, only one type of player would be interested in playing this, a baseball fan, and as someone who's seen a few real-life baseball games in their time, I can quite honestly say that I would have preferred a faithful conversion of the great American sport, instead of this futuristic bastardization which tries to make it more palatable to arcade addicts. EA have done it with ice hockey, American football and soccer, so why not with baseball?

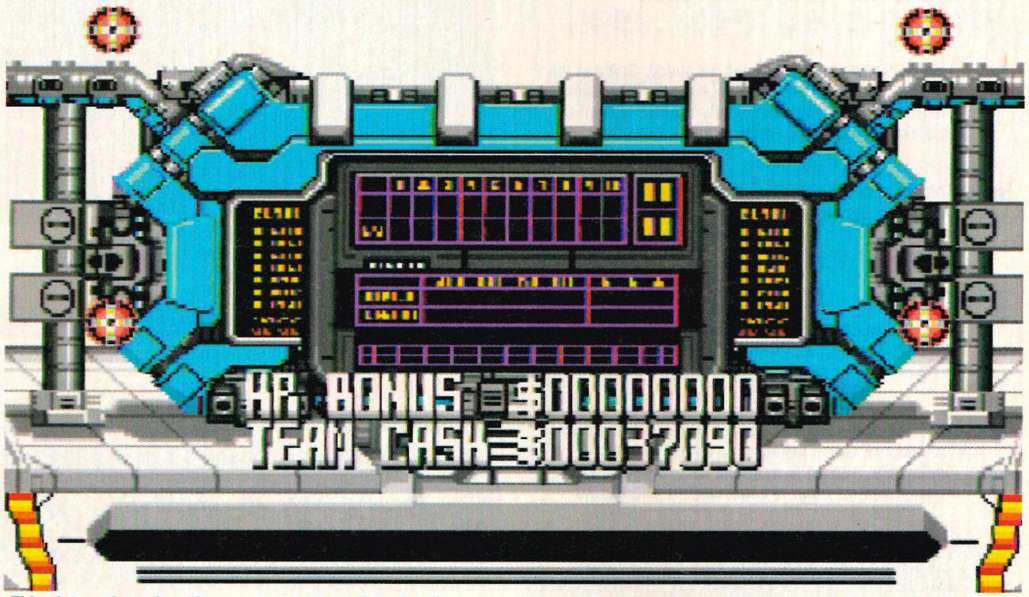
DOM



I can't remember if I hit this ball, I hope so as I reckon I would have got to the third base with this hit. This fielder doesn't look to be doing much but watch him spring into action when the ball comes close, he's like a fly.

This picture describes whereabouts the crackers, or in other words the mine, are set. If a player manages to catch one of these, you'll witness a dramatic death. The crackers increase on each match until it's virtually impossible to move.

This is what the whole thing's about. The object of winning all the time is that you can then upgrade your players. Depending on how many players who score runs and catch, is the amount of money the teams get from winning. This money then goes into invcesting in new players, so you can now have the top squad available — that is if you've got enough money. If you haven't, well you better start practising so you get some decent palyers and win some games.



This picture shows how the money can accumulate, totally forgetting who won the cash; I'll say it's mine as I think I tried the hardest. Use the money to buy the top players but bear in mind you need to keep winning.

INSTANT ACCESS

BASEBALL 2020

EA
£44.99
OUT SEPT

1–2 players

16Mbit

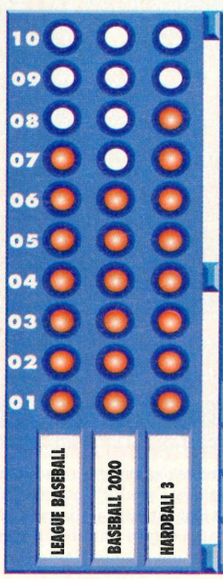
passwords available

available in UK

GAMEPLAY	06
GRAPHICS	07
SOUND	05
ADDICTION	05

OVERALL

06



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The winner will be the entrant, in the opinion of the judges, with the most apt, original and skilful answer to the tiebreaker. Second and Third prizes will be awarded accordingly and will be judged in the same manner. The judges' decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Funds are not available for any other use.

If the total valid entries are less than 15,000 then the first 10 prizes will be substituted with a sum equal to 4% of the monies received, Second 25 prizes substituted with 1% and Third 50 prizes substituted with 0.2%. Monies received will be held in a deposit account, withdrawals will require the signature of a solicitor.

THE CLOSING DATE OF THE COMPETITION IS 12.11.93. COMPETITION WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED WITHIN 28 DAYS AFTER THE CLOSING DATE.

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REVIEW

Gauntlet 4

Our very own Steve Bough is lost in the maze of catacombs, desperately searching for the way out. Join his quest for the fortunes that await those who dare venture into the world of Gauntlet. (Then again, you could leave him to rot and die in eternal damnation...)

Gauntlet has got to be one of the most tedious, repetitive, frustrating games around

Through Domark, their original UK marketing outlet, Tengen have previously released such magnificent Mega Drive masterpieces as *Paperboy 2* and *Dragon's Fury*. But most people forget that Tengen's greatest success was with their arcade machine (under their original Atari Games moniker) *Gauntlet*.

The coin-op was unleashed upon the hungry arcades in the early Eighties, and through US Gold soon got converted onto 8-bit computers like the Spectrum and later onto Amigas and Atari STs. On the original arcade game, four players could play at once, although early computer versions couldn't cope with this. Through an adaptor, though, 16-bit owners could have the full thing in the comfort of their own home. The latest era in consoles had been ignored by *Gauntlet* until now (barring a quick escapade onto the diminishing Atari Lynx).

Surrounded by trouble the wizard is probably contemplating his next move. Personally I'd think this was all far too much trouble and go home and have a nice cup of tea, no doubt that's why I wasn't chosen for the starring role in *Gauntlet*. The exit is hidden in the bottom of the picture and you're stuck in the middle. The only way to survive all of this hassle is to fire and fight your way out of it. The teleporters will certainly come in handy, but don't count on these to save your bacon, check your health at all times as the wizards is getting really low. Don't forget that your energy will be greatly zapped by confrontation.

The game stayed virtually underground for a long period of time until someone at Tengen struck on the bright idea that if *Gauntlet* were to be released onto the Mega Drive it could make some serious money. And with the arrival of the Sega Tap, it seemed now was the perfect time for the four-player extravaganza to be unleashed upon unsuspecting console owners who thought they'd seen the last of it.

The game itself is a cross between a shoot-'em-up, adventure and roleplaying game – hence its mass appeal. The gauntlet is a huge labyrinthine structure spawning a mass of evil – and it's no use running away as they won't disappear until you've killed them. Since the days of the original *Gauntlet* there have not been a huge amount of changes in its numerous conversions. There are still loads of evil creatures, ghosts, mutants and deaths hanging around the catacombs, and each dungeon is laden with treasure, but as you'd expect it's not easy to find.

The four fighters at your disposal have all travelled over from the arcade machine. Merlin, the wizard, has magical powers, and his lightning shots are very fast and powerful. Thyra, the valkyrie, has a high level of defence due to her strong armour. Questor, the elf, by far the fastest of the four, his arrows shots that are swift but wimpy. Thor, the barbarian, the most physically powerful of the four, wields a large axe that flies slowly but inflicts major damage.

There are four play modes. The arcade mode is a direct conversion of the original *Gauntlet* arcade game. On starting out, this is the best mode to familiarise yourself with the game. Quest mode has plenty of puzzles, and unlike the other modes you take on the role of an adventurer. You have to gain experience points and earn gold to purchase vital weapons and items. Battle mode gives you the opportunity to fight each other in a battle arena, only the strongest will survive. Record mode keeps track of your performance in each level, so the faster and more skilfully you advance, the higher your rating as an adventurer will be.

With over 90 levels *Gauntlet 4* is certainly not a small game. The one question you must ask yourself with this game is, have you got time to play it?

OVERALL 05

This map will show you how to get out of this evil trap you're in. As always, the exit is heavily guarded by beasts from an unknown dimension — the only way to survive is by killing.

1. These black-headed mutants must be destroyed at all costs if you're to get to the exit without losing a life. It can be done but make sure you keep on the auto-fire or you don't stand a chance.

2. This passageway has some lovely items awaiting your consumption. As long as you keep on firing, the ghouls shouldn't give you too much grief, and you'll be rewarded by some delicious bounty.

3. These piles of bones that you'll find scattered about all of *Gauntlet 4* produce more monsters. As you approach they'll start to spawn more nasty lifeforms, all of which must be disposed of.

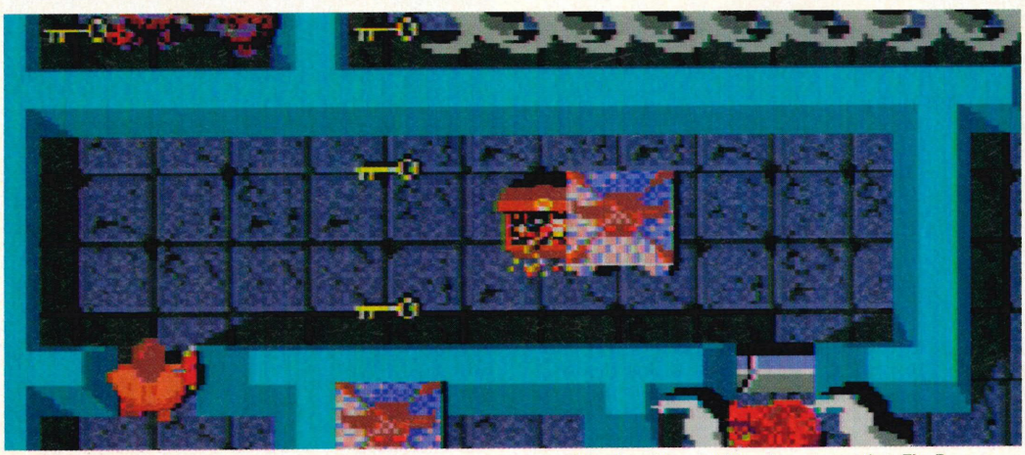
4. The exit. As you can see, the wizard has already made his way there, all he has to do now is step on the top and he'll go zooming down to the next level. Hopefully your energy hasn't decreased too much.

5. One of the many thousands of treasure chests located around this game. With over 90 levels you can be sure that there are plenty more where they have come from, all holding lovely gold.

Have you seen the original Gauntlet game? Well if you have then you will know all about this one too. This is the fourth game of a series that is showing about as much imagination as the Golden Axe sagas. If you like the games and you've got three other mates who do too, then Gauntlet 4, with its multi-player option, might just be the answer to your sad little prayers. If you're not sure and you want my advice, I would go out to your local summer fete, buy a pot plant like a geranium and go home and tend it. Believe me, you will save yourself about £35 and get a lot more stimulation than you will from a mindless rehash of a game like this.

At a time when there are several big games breaking onto the market I can only believe that someone is having a joke by releasing another of these games. Don't get me wrong, Gauntlet was great at the time, but that was about ten years ago!

DAVE



A good aerial shot of the prizes that await you, plenty of keys and treasure all for the taking, but it's not as easy as that. The Roman-style paving slabs are there to fool you, they contain at least 20 monsters all eagerly waiting to suck the blood from you. Keep your wits about you if you fancy any chance of survival, get ready to fire and magic if you have to and you should be all right.

A strange level, the only way out of this is to destroy the blocks standing in your way. The darker coloured blocks are the ones that give way. Whilst your stood in the safety of this area, shoot between the gaps in the blocks to get rid of many ghouls.

Using the warrior once more, it's time to make a decision. He's heading straight for the exit. Now this is the main idea but if you're feeling greedy, you might just be tempted to go back and collect the treasure that you've left, as well as the key and the magic — all these are very useful.

As you can see from this map, there's bounty galore, but also a serious amount of baddies that you're going to have to confront. The treasure chest and food in the centre of the screen is guarded by two deaths. In challenging these you'll lose some health, so fire at them.

On this level you're the warrior. He's a powerhouse in his own right, having the strongest physical abilities of the four. As you can see from the right-hand side, you only have one key. You can also see there's loads of doors that need opening, so you must find the keys before it's too late.

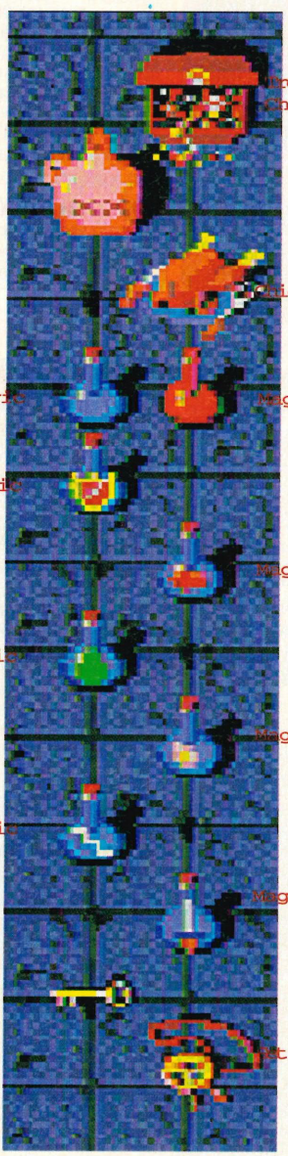
IS ALL THAT TREASURE REALLY MINE

The list of items below is the essential guide of standing any chance within this game. You'll find items located on nearly every level, but as this is certainly no push-over, they're always difficult to reach — normally guarded by several ghouls and mutant creatures waiting to get you.

While I appreciated the original draw of Gauntlet – four-player games in the Eighties were a rarity – I still fail to understand why even now people are raving on about this game's playability. As far as I'm concerned, Gauntlet has got to be one of the most tedious, repetitive, frustrating games around. All the levels are practically the same, and you keep coming across the same old evil folk over and over again.

When I saw Gauntlet converted to the Amiga, I thought the game looked rather dated, but the novelty of a four-player game saved it. There is a far better range of four-player games on the Mega Drive, though. This conversion is incredibly faithful to the original arcade machine, and a lot better in some respects, but due to the design of Gauntlet no matter how many bells and whistles Tengen add to a new conversion, it still remains that the basic premise is boring. And that's something they can do nothing about.

DOM



FOOD JAR
This is classed as destructible food. You don't have to be a genius to work out that you can destroy this most precious of items.

MAGIC BOTTLE
The first of the many magic jars you'll find along the route. This one will increase your armour whic is of massive importance to survive.

MAGIC BOTTLE
Aren't you lucky, if two bottles aren't enough to help your armour, you've been blessed with a third. Now you have no excuses not to finish it.

MAGIC BOTTLE
This potion enables you to have magic power. This can result in wiping out all of the surrounding enemies at once.

MAGIC BOTTLE
this game on your own, but it does add another dimension to this if you rope in this game on your own, but it does add another dimension to this if

KEY
These keys open doors. Quite often you'll find your way blocked and if you don't have the correct key you're not getting through.

TREASURE CHEST
This treasure chest contains all the necessaries such as gold. This will enable you to acquire better weapons along your perilous journey.

CHICKEN
This chicken comes under the same category as the food, but unlike the other you can't destroy it. Each chicken gives you 100 health points.

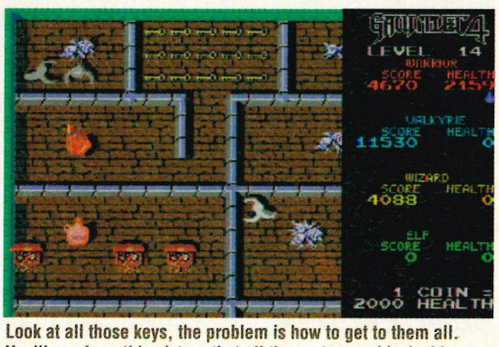
MAGIC BOTTLE
This again is an increase-armour magic. They are not always in the handiest of places, but as soon as you see one, grab it.

MAGIC BOTTLE
This magic increases your speed: very handy if you're set on a time limit, which you often are. Not as many about as the armour magics.

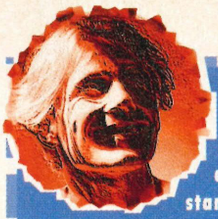
MAGIC BOTTLE
From this magic the power of your shot will now be doubly strong. Very effective on characters such as the warrior as he has huge strength.

MAGIC BOTTLE
This magic bottle gives you the extra speed needed to escape the ghosts. Only to be found in limited supply, it's a life-saver.

SET OF KEYS
This set of keys has magic qualities, in this case they can make you invisible for a short period of time, to really surprise the enemy.



Look at all those keys, the problem is how to get to them all. You'll see from this picture that all the routes are blocked by nasty creatures waiting to pounce on you. The small piles of bones on the floor generate ghouls — nice!



Having never played Gauntlet in the arcades or on computer, I looked forward to seeing what all the fuss was about. We started off playing with three players and personally I think multi-player mode is by far the best method to enjoy this game. With more than one player you can help each other out, turning the game into a team game. Of course, the options are all there if you wish to play this game on your own, but it does add another dimension to this if you rope in a few mates.

As quite often happens with RPG/shoot-'em-ups, the graphics and music aren't the best I've ever seen, but they're sufficient. The quality of this game is in the sheer size of it. The 90 levels ensure that you'll certainly get your money's worth – somewhat of a rarity these days – and the gameplay is challenging to the point of frustration. You do find that you get wound up with it from time to time, but there's always a way out, and the satisfaction you get from finding it more than makes up it.

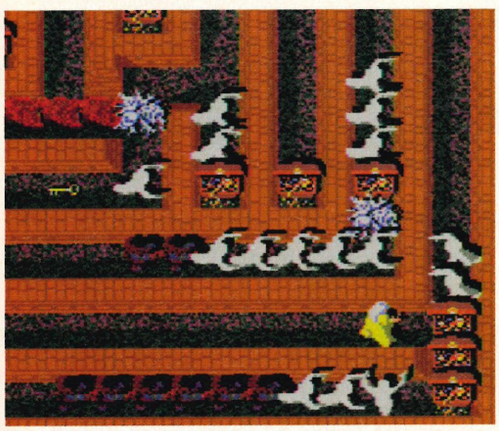
Gauntlet 4 offers the serious gamesplayer a tough challenge on a big scale.

STEVE

The little elf doesn't realise what he's let himself in for. The route might look safe for him at this point but he's going to have to confront all the nasty things that are waiting for him. There's no point trying to avoid them, because apart from the treasure which you badly need, there's also a key. This key is essential as there's a door that must be opened and the only way to do this is by unlocking it with the collected key. The elf is a great fighter, it's a good job too as this looks severely nasty.

The wizard with a ton on his plate. The red manhole covers are teleporters: these will transport him to the next closest section. The problem with this is that it normally transports you to an absolute wealth of trouble. The jar with food needs to be obtained, you also have to work out a safe method to get to the exits. This is no easy feat, tough luck mate!

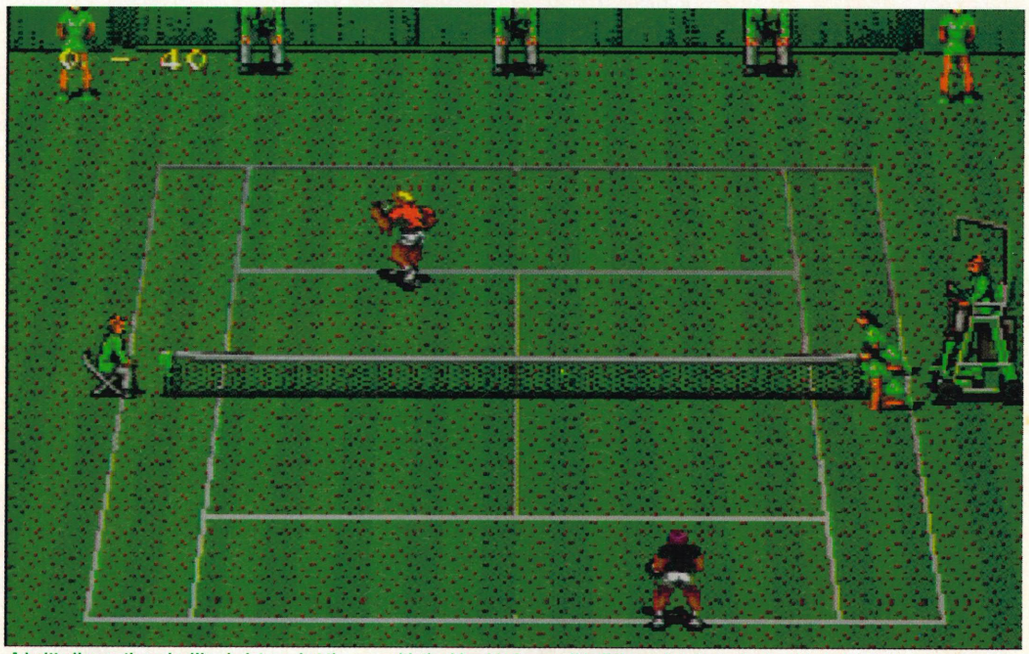
INSTANT ACCESS



The wizard certainly has a lot to contend with on this level. Overawed by the treasure, he has no regard for the danger he's facing. Once he collects the treasure , the ghouls are going to seize him from all angles. The thing with this game is that everything you need is guarded so you have to take your chances — if you have a magic, now's the time to use it.

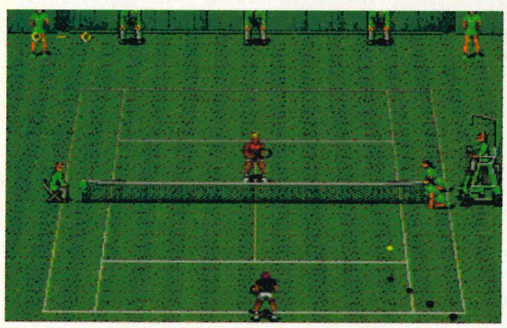
REVIEW

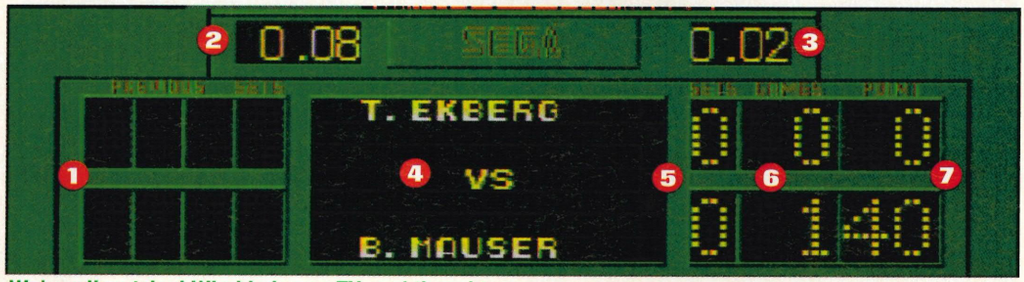
wimbledo



Admittedly a rather pixellised picture, but the guy with the blond hair, possibly Edberg, has just whacked his ball into the net after a clever top-spin lob from the opposition. Lobs, sliced returns and pretty much every shot you'll find in tennis have been incorporated into this top tennis game, making it totally realistic. The controls and shots are quite hard to grasp at first but you'll soon get the hang of them and be up amongst the best racket wielders.

Below, a singles match is under way... and a fine smash from the net leaves the opposition totally stumped, even Boris Becker wouldn't reach that. Above, the format for starting a game, plenty of options to choose from so choose away.





We've all watched Wimbledon on TV, and thought what the hell does that scoreboard say. Well, aren't you lucky I know something about tennis otherwise this would all be made up, ha, ha.

1. In the first set there is no reason to put the scores up as nobody's won a set yet. When they do, the set scores will go here accordingly.
2. This is a bit confusing as there are two times, well I know for a fact that one of them is the amount of time the players have been on court.
3. Back to the confusion, if this were the time then the time would be two minutes past midnight... hold on, something's not right with this.
4. The players, bearing a close resemblance to the real guys. Ekberg (duh, I wonder where they got that from?) and Mauser are battling it out on centre court.
5. The number of sets won by each player goes here. In men's tennis they play five sets so it's the first to win three sets that's declared the winner.
6. Same again this time with the games. One assumes that you know how many games are in a set... oh you don't, well it's the first to reach six, unless in a tie-break.
7. Points. The scoring system originated in France, that's why we have deuce. Anyway you can see that Mauser is 40–love on his serve in this game.

No doubt you're expecting loads of waffle about tennis... that's good, because you're going to get it. Wimbledon, the greatest tennis championship there is, is finally brought to the Mega Drive after an outing on Master System before the real thing this year. Weird how the Mega Drive version's only just come out, but there you go. It's probably due to the programmers waiting for Sega to release the Sega Tap which *Wimbledon* utilises.

Now you can recreate the days of strawberries and cream and Robinson's barley water whilst perched on the sofa in the comfort of your own home. But have you got what it takes to become Wimbledon champion, and join that elite rank of players such as Borg, Graf, McEnroe and Navratilova?

There are four modes for playing. In the practise mode, you can brush up on your serving, driving the ball, smashing and volleying. If you haven't seen a tennis game before, it's worth playing in the practise mode when you start to get the feel of it. The exhibition mode gives you the opportunity to play one-off matches against the computer or with other players. The qualifying mode, means you must win three consecutive matches to be allowed to play in the Wimbledon tournament. Once in this, again you must win three matches to take home the trophy.

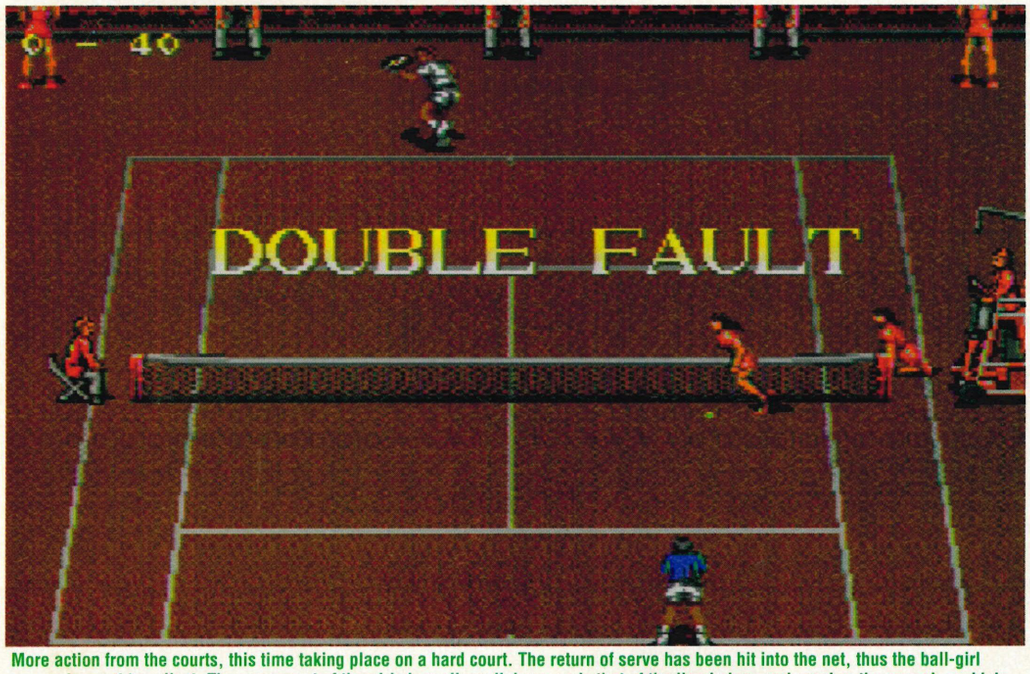
There are three types of courts, unlike the real Wimbledon arena. Grass is the fastest, that's why players initially fear the real championships, and clay or hard are marginally slower and affect the bounce of the ball. It is necessary to be an expert on all three surfaces if you're to stand any chance of taking home that trophy.

With so few decent tennis games on the Mega Drive, *Wimbledon* has a smashing chance of serving up the ace game we're all hoping for.

Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi, Steve Bough... One of these three isn't a top tennis player. That's right the Mega Power man just couldn't get passed the strict qualifying rounds and had to make do with the strawberries and cream. This is his story: the story of that top bloke who can't say no to sweets...

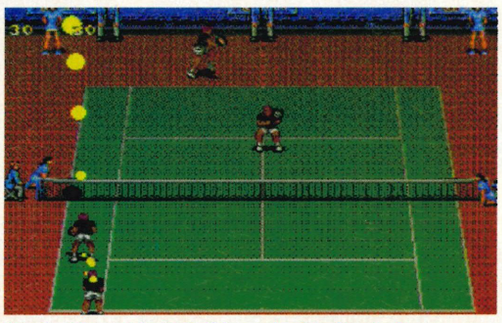
OVERALL

08



More action from the courts, this time taking place on a hard court. The return of serve has been hit into the net, thus the ball-girl runs onto court to collect. The movement of the girls is really well done, as is that of the line judges and umpire; the speech could do with a slight reworking but on the whole is excellent. With the double fault, the server has lost a point so there was no point for the opposing player to return the serve, but tennis is a well fast game.

...if you want the best tennis game on any console, Sega have it with Wimbledon!



In a doubles match, the ball is soaring into the air after a wicked return of serve. The next usual move is a lob or a smash but I suggest a clever use of backspin with a slight amount of right-hand side... hold on, this isn't snooker — just go for it!

I'LL SEE YOU ON COURT

Unlike Wimbledon, Sega tennis has an option of three courts, whereas the All England club is exclusively grass, and grass only.

HARD COURT

This court has the added advantage of those big servers of having a big bounce, so you can blast a serve and it will bounce right over the opponents head. The speed is slower than a grass court, so if you are not a fast player, this would be more suited to your style of play. Play on each for preferred choices.

GRASS COURT

The surface of Wimbledon, and if you are to play this championship for real, then you should stick to grass, as should be properly done. Grass is notoriously fast, and can often be extremely slippy but it is by far the best surface, where only the best can survive, do you think you can stand the pace.

CLAY COURT

Creating a high bounce, this court does play quite slowly, but is favoured by the weaker less agile players, mainly old people. Virginia Wade I've heard prefers clay as she can't handle the pace of grass any longer, never mind Ginny, we still love you.

You always have to be sceptical of tennis games, there have been so many duffers in the past, but Wimbledon is pretty good. Nine skill levels to play on, a variety of different players to play with and four-way action make this a really playable release from Sega, certainly worthy of the official Lawn Tennis club's licence.

At first I found myself doing the usual headless chicken charge all over the court, swatting thin air with my racquet and generally slagging the game off. But once I'd got the hang of the controls I found I was able to play deft little lobs, sweeping cross court shots and terrorise my opponents with a wicked top spin. This game has the highly addictive plus factor that the longer you play the better the game lets you become. You really can produce any shot you want if you practise at it, and this factor alone gives the game a longevity that many of its predecessors lacked.

I do think that the sprites are a little too small, which makes rallying a lot tougher than it needs to be as it's hard to get co-ordinated. But that said, if you are looking for a tennis game (which I don't think many people are) then this is the best of a mediocre bunch.

DAVE

The options screen. Well I have so much space to fill here so be prepared for an absolute load of waffle. To be honest, I don't even know what a Locus display is, but if anyone out there would like to enlighten me I'd be more than happy to hear from you: send replies to the usual address. All these options don't have much significance on the state of play at all, but I suppose you have to put in an options screen for the sake of the punters. But surely it helps to put in an options screen that makes a modicum of sense instead of this drivel. I suggest you go straight to the exit and get on with the tennis, it's much more fun!

BEAT THEM IF YOU CAN

These are the top-rated players in Wimbledon. There are 12 to choose from, each with their own special talent. So which one is your choice?, here have a look at some examples...

Number one seed, A Hines, and what a player he is. You can move the levels of the players to make them perform at their best.

Number seven seed, Wilson, or Willy as he likes to be known (don't ask why) is a very fast net player and a hard opponent.

Number six Selink has his level of play set on nine, so you can imagine he's going to be firing on all cylinders, watch him.

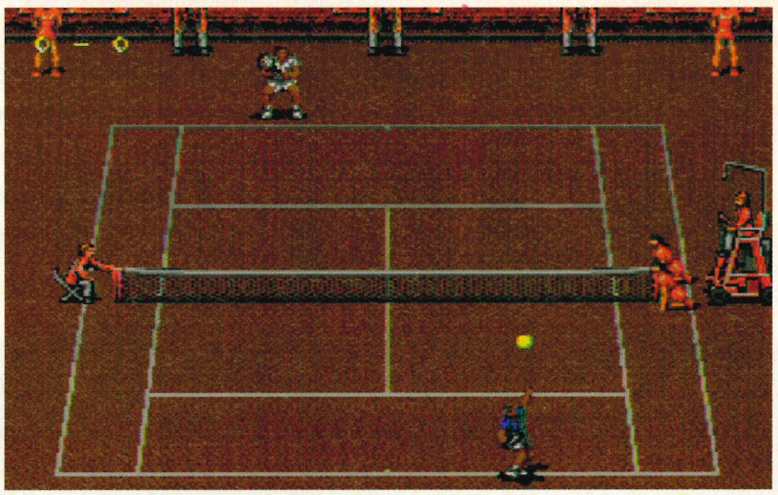
Number eight, who's a left hander and a superb net player. Don't let him catch you out with those fast returns.

S Evans, the number nine on level nine. Firstly I don't think he's Welsh, phew, but he's a damn fine all-rounder.

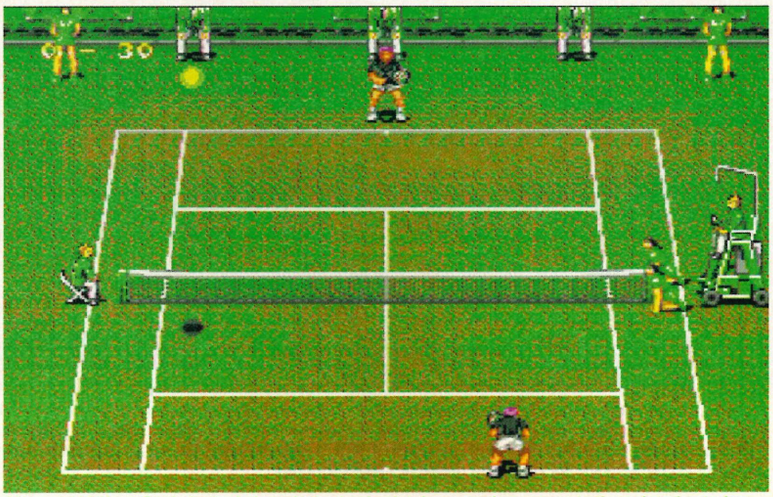
This number four seeded player is another specialist at the net. Take care in choosing your opponent, as these guys are good.

K Bishop, the number eleven seed in the world, another net player who's a left hander as well as a very fast runner.

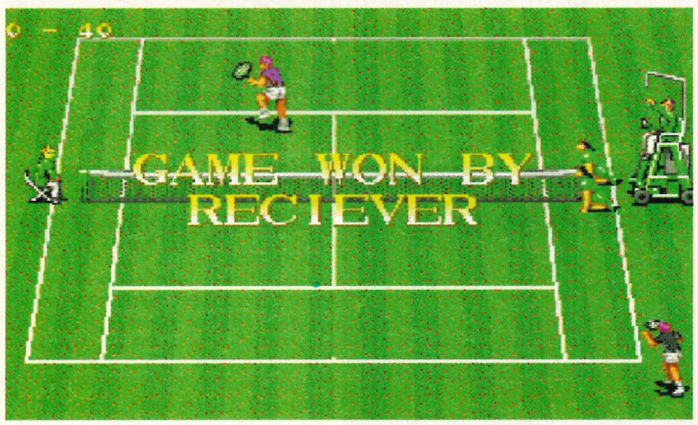
Mr Hart, the bald-headed number twelve seed who's a great all-rounder, might not have enough pace for the net players.



A singles match on a hard court, the game has just started and there's no score as of yet. The server is on his first serve, so if he messes this one up, he can have another go. Starting a five-set match, you'll need to get the feel of the ball, and assess the opponent you are playing. Don't worry if you lose the first few games as it takes a while to really get into the match, just like real tennis.



Above and below, Sonic in the below shot gets absolutely everywhere, even to the point of entering Wimbledon; unfortunately he wasn't allowed to play, seeing as he was too fast. The above singles match on a grass court will undoubtedly be a fast game, with two pacy players and on the speediest surface, so make sure you have on those extra-grippy trainers.



The pictures show a variety of action on the courts. The top picture is of a player serving, giving you a good shot of the line judges, which are well detailed. The bottom picture shows the server has won the game with a fast return. The net players are extremely hard to play against as they constantly charge the net, returning the serve quickly.

Psion's Match Point on the Spectrum was, without doubt, THE GREATEST tennis game ever. The oft-mentioned Super Tennis on the SNES pales into insignificance compared to the extraordinary playability oozing from Match Point... Wimbledon has taken all the accuracy and precision of Match Point and splashed on new graphics and enhanced sound to place it up there with Psion's greatest achievement.

I have a sneaking suspicion that the guys who programmed J League have had a strong hand in Wimbledon. The realistic graphics, unique animation and distinctive sound effects are all reminiscent of our favourite footballing game. Personally, I think there's little more they could have done to Wimbledon. Everything is a perfect representation of the real thing. Okay, so it's not all cute and cuddly like some tennis games programmed by the Japs, but it's all the better for it. Realism rules.

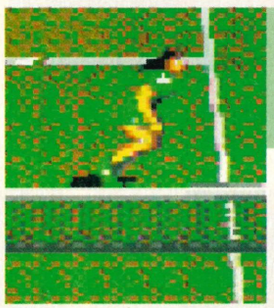
There's nothing more to be said: if you want the best tennis game on any console, Sega have it with Wimbledon!

DOM

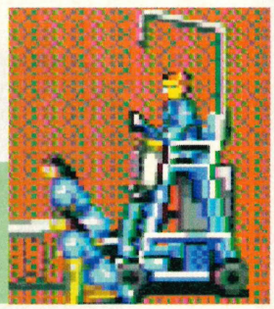
WHO'S WHO

These small boxes inform you of the part each person plays in Wimbledon, and their main objective.

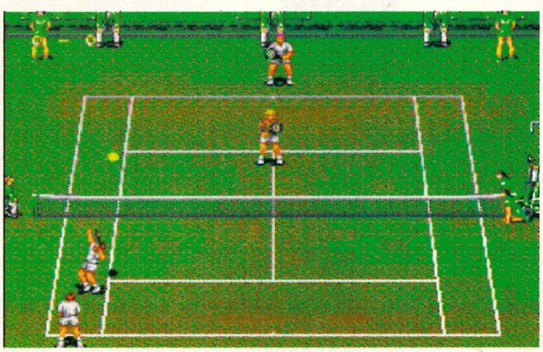
THE SERVER
Probably the most important person, take away the server and you have no match. Practise serving as it's vastly important.



BALL GIRL
Recruited normally from surrounding schools, so I don't know where Sega got their girls. Where are the ball boys?



THE UMPIRE
The umpire is the person who holds the whole match together. He can overrule decisions and make them up as he goes along.



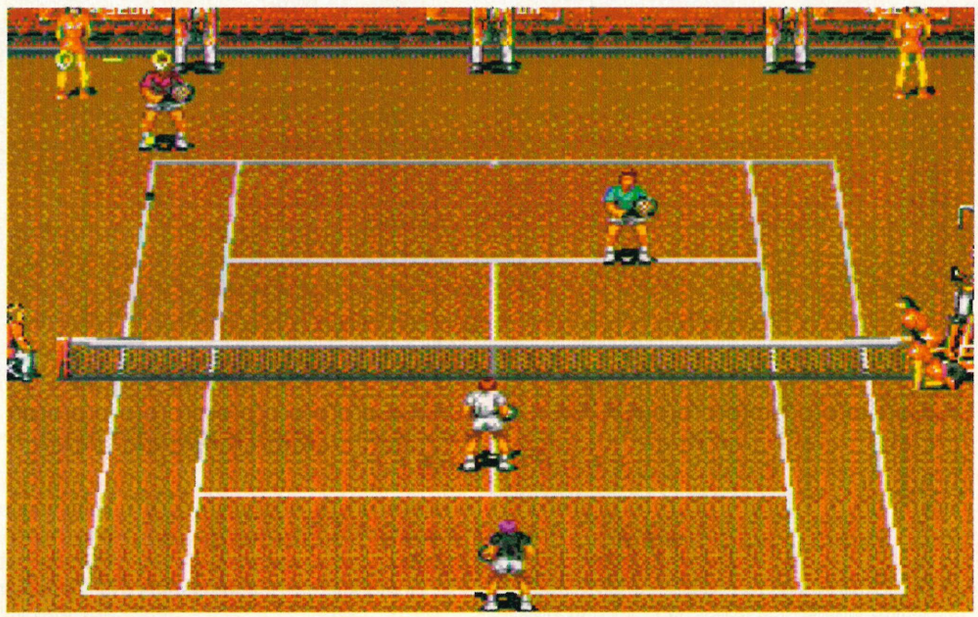
Another match, again a doubles and again from the picture below you can see that the closest team are in the wrong position for a return of serve. As the player goes for the smash, the baseline player should be positioned more in the centre of the court. When and if the opposite team return the serve, they will be best placed to put the ball into the right-hand corner of the court which is wide open.

A doubles match in action. The player on the baseline is covering the player in front in case they miss the ball, which is quite probable. It's not always wise to follow the other player as often you'll find yourself out of position. Study the shots carefully and decide on your appropriate position.

I love tennis, I can sit and watch it all day on TV, I can even play it to a reasonable standard... On Sega I approached the game with some trepidation, but was welcomed by what I saw. Initially playing on the singles mode, I got absolutely thrashed by the computer. We then had a three-player game, the formiddable team of Dave and Dom taking me and the computer on. Well, I was just about keeping up when Dave did a disappearing act, but when we reverted to singles, challenging Dom, he soundly beat me, proclaiming to be a tennis legend and repeatedly asking for barley water. The game's main feature is fun. It's brilliant fun to play. Whether it be singles or doubles you can be guaranteed that you'll enjoy every minute of it. Even when you're being beaten you still want to keep playing. The whole look of the game is of fine quality, the graphics are spot on with the character sprites looking extremely detailed. The FX are good as are the little added touches of ball boy movement and the voice of the umpire.

With so many varied modes and a choice of courts, you're going to be hard pushed to get bored with this game, and the option of the four players only enhances an already terrific game. Wimbledon as a tennis championship oozes class, and as a computer game has the same effect. Even if you don't like tennis, I'm sure you'll love this. Who knows, you might be the next John Lloyd?

STEVE



Doubles match on clay court. As opposed to the positions of the players shown on other pictures, these guys seem to have found the right formation for an effective partnership. The ball has been returned to the top left of the picture and the probable return from here is the cross-court forehand slice. This will send the ball spinning deep into the opposing half. Fortunately for the closest team they are well positioned to return this shot: the net player should stay at the net and counteract the next move, whereas the base player should return the shot up the tramlines and force an error. Try not to pull the net player back — separate the players so each know their positions, keeping to this structure will ensure a good doubles partnership. Knowing how the other player will react to shots is imperative if you are to keep winning.

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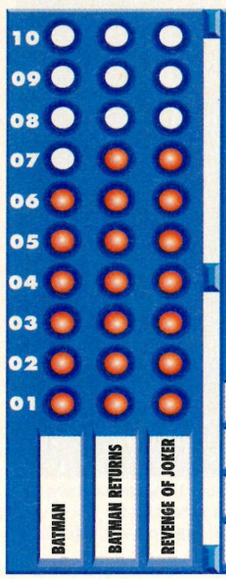

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OVERALL
07

REVIEW

The one thing about simulations is that they take ages to play – which, after all, is a fair reflection of real life, so you can't knock that. However, if you haven't got three hours solid to spare for F-15 Strike Eagle, you won't fully appreciate it. Like all sims, it takes ages to familiarise yourself with the controls, however MicroProse have successfully translated the main plane control to various button/direction combinations on the joypad making them easy to access. I've played computer flight sims, and the feeling I got when I picked up F-15 was very similar. Like the real thing, you couldn't throw the plane around and had to compensate for banking and thrust. The speed is as good as can be expected, considering the Mega Drive is shifting around a hell of a lot of solid polygons. In fact I have very few gripes with F-15. I played it for a good afternoon and got totally enthralled in all the large and small missions on offer. The way the autopilot automatically cuts in if you're off course is very helpful, and because you can grab back the reins at any time, you still have direct control over your destiny.

While this won't go down as one of the all-time classic Mega Drive games, I'm sure any flight sims fans with other computers will be impressed to see that the Mega Drive can do it just as well. Sure, if you don't like flight sims you won't like this. That's obvious: but you probably won't get much better on the Mega Drive.

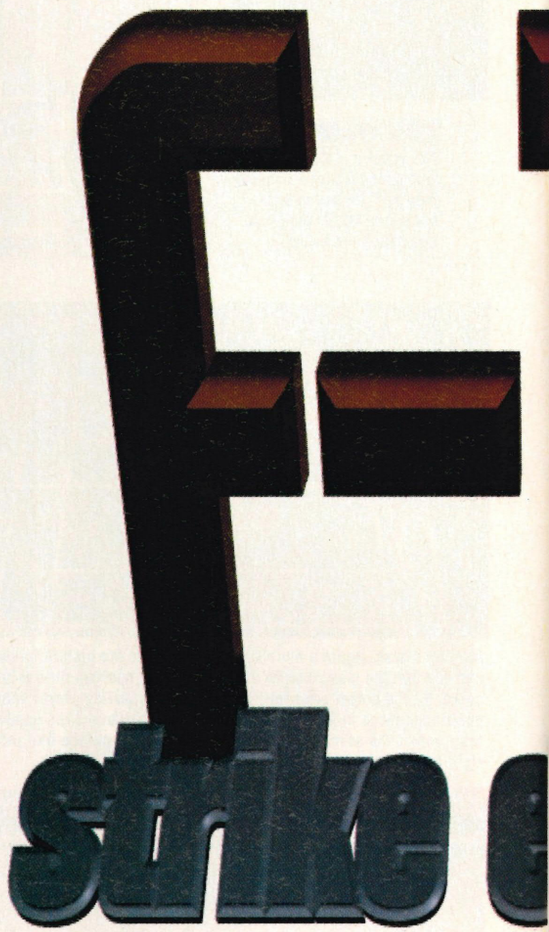
DOM

Last year it was driving games, this year it's flight sims. *MiG-29, Jungle Strike, Thunderhawk, Gunship...* is their no end to the air battles that the Mega Drive has received over the past few months? It would seem not as MicroProse, the most prolific producers of simulation games, join the happy band of Sega licensees.

I have very few gripes with F-15. I played it for a good afternoon and got totally enthralled

With *F-15* the emphasis is on simulation, thus enabling you to really feel as if you're in control of a *F-15 Strike Eagle* combat plane. This comes as no surprise when you know that MicroProse was established back in 1982 by Bill Stealey and Sid Meier, the former being an ex-jet fighter pilot.

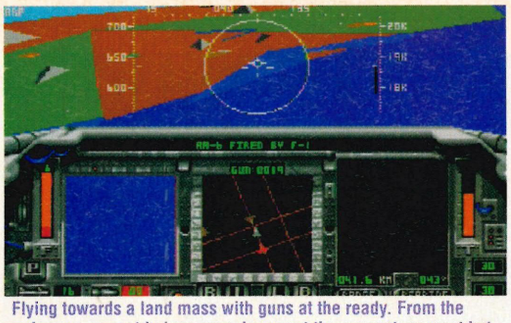
The option select, this enables you to choose exactly the setup which you feel most happy with. Buttons A, B and C can all be changed to suit your desired need. Getting to grips with the controls for *F 15* takes a little while, and it's worth spending some time familiarising yourself with the actual flying of the plane. The controls are very sensitive: too much left or right and the plane is liable to go into a roll, and this could mean a fatal crash --- and that means game over.



Establishing their European offices in 1986, basing their headquarters in Tetbury, Gloucestershire, MicroProse quickly established themselves within the industry as producers of top quality simulation software. The image the company have always portrayed is a producer of games for the serious and mature player. With their grip held firmly on the PC and Amiga formats, MicroProse have been trying to get into the Sega market for over a year now. *F-15* is their first attempt at a 16-bit Sega game, and, like their next two releases *Impossible Mission* and *Airborne Ranger*, is a rerelease of an old Commodore game.

F-15 Strike Eagle II is an out-and-out flight simu-

Oh dear, I ran into some serious trouble and the end result is that I'm dead and my F 15 is certainly out of action. Seeing this is all just a computer game, I can press start and have another go; unfortunately real life's not like this.



Flying towards a land mass with guns at the ready. From the radar you are not in immense danger at the present moment but as you fly closer towards the land you'll be surrounded by MiGs vying for your blood, so some skilful flying is required.

OVERALL

08

Yes, I've just wiped out one of the pussies. Using my gun I blasted him out of the skies, mind you there's no point getting elated about it as there are loads more where that came from. You can see in the top of the picture that the pilot has ejected, which is quite nice to know that I haven't actually killed him. From the cockpit and the picture on the right, the aircraft approaching is friendly so unless you're crazed and deranged by this stage don't shoot it, the consequences could be very serious.

F-15 Eagle II

As if the world wasn't in enough turmoil already, when along comes MicroProse to add to the growing number of war games. Their opinion, like everyone else's, is that conflicts have passed and like old war films, their games do no harm , they just expose the horror of combat. Steve Bough didn't care, he just wanted to bag some bogies...

lation where you have to guide and fly the eponymous plane through a series of highly dangerous missions. The F-15 is the fastest military aircraft, and has the latest in-built weaponry. You'll have to dogfight against the latest combat aircraft and avoid the countless sophisticated missile systems which you'll encounter. The game covers all sorts of terrain, and with the enemy varying on each mission you are going to have to be at your sharpest.

Simulations are notoriously difficult on console – many due to the lack of buttons and poor screen resolution – but perhaps now we've got the self-proclaimed sim kings on console, things will start to pick up. Hopefully, soon you'll be asking yourself, is it real or is it MicroProse?

Your mission briefing for the warring factions in the Gulf. From this picture, the runway is located on the left-hand side: you'll only see this runway if you choose either to fly as a veteran or ace pilot. The primary target on this mission is the oil rig at Bastak: you'll have to locate this so use your radar, and use your missiles when you've found it. The secondary target, as shown, is the missile boat at Bandar Abbas — again, locate and destroy for the completion of this mission.

The internal view of the cockpit and unless you are a fighter pilot yourself, you probably have no idea what's going on. Well, my job is to tell you what is what. Seeing as this game is all based from the inside of the F 15, it certainly helps to know exactly what you're looking at.

1. These are your bearings, they give you an idea exactly in which direction you are going. To be perfectly honest I didn't actually use this that much as there are more important things to concentrate on.
2. The yellow arrow is the main indicator of your direction. The most effective way to play is to keep this yellow arrow bang in the middle of the screen, this will keep the plane in a straight line.
3. When you've located the enemy and they're flying into the middle of the screen, this circle will appear. This is your indication that the enemy is ready to be fired on, in other words you've locked on.
4. The altitude meter shows you at which height you're flying. Obviously you don't want to fly too low as you're likely to crash; alternatively, don't fly too high as there's nothing to shoot at, apart from UFOs.
5. Your fuel gauge, this indicates the amount of kerosene you have, which at the present moment is full to the brim. On ace and veteran pilots your fuel will go down, but on the other two it remains the same.
6. Using the sophisticated laser weapon system, this gives you television pictures of your targets. This is most effective on finding out who and what you need to direct your missiles at.
7. Basically just informs you of which weapon you have access to at the moment. It changes rapidly: sometimes you'll be flying along and you need a different weapon so glance here to make sure you have the right one.
8. The radar is the most important aspect of any cockpit. If it weren't for this you would have no idea of what was approaching. Make constant references to this to check the direction of the enemy and how close they are.
9. This display shows you what you have hit and what is approaching. It will tell you what sort of enemy it is and inform you if it's friendly or highly dangerous, which most of them are.
10. This picture gives you identification of the dangers you're going to encounter. From the above shot you can see I'm on my way home for a nice cup of tea, and I can tell you I really need it.
11. This is your afterburner or thrust: use it when you need to accelerate out of danger spots, which is quite often. There is not a lot left so use it carefully, you don't get given much of it.
12. The dials and buttons along the bottom of the cockpit indicate bearings, the range and distance of incoming aircraft, and the number of weapons you have left in your artillery.

Flight of the navigator...

MiG-29

Released: July 1993

Released by Domark, *MiG* was hailed as the fastest flight simulation around. The unique training mode allowed the player to quickly get to grips with controls before setting off for the real thing. But what most people likes was the way you could view the plane from different points, inside and out of the aircraft. Weaponry was of the same ilk as *F-15*, but there were five missions, slightly less than *F-15*. The game was heralded throughout the industry as the only decent flight sim on the Mega Drive (not a tough accolade to win), however with the release of *F-15* we may have to rewrite the history books.

I used to love flight sims on the home computer, those days you would just waste pretending you were Tom Cruise, the phone calls you would miss as you came in to land and didn't want to muck things up. However, the few scrappy ones that the Mega Drive has thrown up so far has led to my gradual swing away from the genre. F-15 brought it all flooding back to me. The roar of the engines, chucking out chaff and flares to distract incoming missiles and the tooth-grinding approaches to home base as you try to land with no fuel. This cart seems to have everything, six different war theatres, excellent external views, and even an auto pilot control that kicks in when you get too far off course. I found it tough to adapt to the control method to at first, but once I was up it became like second nature, honest.

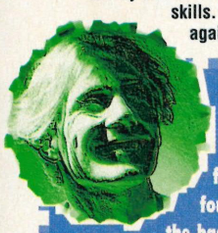
On my first go I shot down five bandits and two of my mates... no medals there for me, but if you've been hoping that someone would churn out a half decent flight sim for your console then check this one out as soon as it arrives in your shop. Oh, and by the way, make sure you by a posey joystick for the full effect.

DAVE

The strategy map shows you the targets. As is apparent, the primary and secondary targets are located quite close to the runway. From here you can see that you shouldn't have far to fly before you're ready to strike. The surrounding area of the Gulf looks pretty massive, but you don't have to fly around all of it — you basically need to go in there, do the job, turn round and come home. If you decide to wander off, you probably won't come back.

My mission debriefing. it's quite obvious I'm an apalling pilot: I only managed to shoot down four enemy aircraft and my total score was 100, so I don' t think I'll be getting a medal for my flying skills. Anyway, I'll take to the skies and try my luck again, this time hopefully I'll do better.

Your mission briefing for Nordkapp. You'll take off from the aircraft carrier USS Kennedy and fly towards your first mission, which entails destroying your primary target. This is the cargo ship at Murmansk which must be taken out before you can progress onto the secondary target. The latter is a Sub Pen at Severomorsk. Wipe out both targets to complete your mission.



I was never a big fan of flight simulations, although after playing F-15 I'm beginning to mellow. At first I got really wound up with it; I found the controls a complete pain in the backside, and the general flying of the aircraft far too sensitive. The more I played it, though, the more I got into it; missions became objectives of mine, but still the niggling doubt in the back of my mind wouldn't go away. I appreciate that the game is really going to appeal to any would-be pilots or fans of flight sims, but sadly I'm not one of those.

The music and sound FX are good and the gameplay is also sharp. I don't want to take anything away from MicroProse, they obviously have great faith in their product, it's just that in comparison to recent games like Jungle Strike, I feel they're going to find the going pretty tough. As a first effort, not bad, but wait to see what other flying games they have in the pipeline before splashing out on this.

STEVE

The game worlds, as they're so called, are the places where trouble is constantly kicking off. They are relative to the problems we have in the world today. All these places have at one stage or another been classed as war zones. Libya, for example, is a constant threat to the world's safety, but they do have an utter madman as their leader. Titles such as "Across The Line Of Death" give the indication that you're in for quite an unpleasant time. The other worlds have equally scary titles, but don't be put off by this, most of the action takes place in the air anyway. They are all of similar difficulty so just go for it!

Approaching another land area and what's that in front? Oh look, it's a nasty MiG: get ready with your weapons and blast this guy out of the skies. Don't feel bad, it's your job.

The only time you see the runway is on ace or veteran mode of the pilot selection. You can see why, as well, because it's very easy to crash — so you have to be really good.

INSTANT ACCESS

F-15

MICROPROSE
£39.99
OUT OCT

10
09
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01

F-22 INTERCEPTOR
F-15
MIG 29

one player
8Mbit
passwords for missions
available in UK

GAMEPLAY	08
GRAPHICS	07
SOUND	06
ADDICTION	07

OVERALL
08

REVIEW

THUNDER

Returning from the campaigns against the evil drug lords in the jungle, Stevie Bough thought he was going to have a peaceful holiday in his beloved Cornwall. With a call from International Rescue, though, our man dons his overalls and flying goggles and steps into the cockpit.

Core Design, the most famous thing to come from Derby – next to Brian Clough – release on eager Mega-CD owners a game that they hope will finally put to rest the accusations that the Mega-CD is nothing but a glorified storage device for the Mega Drive. Core, as the UK's top Mega-CD developer, are adamant that they will refute this.

At the start of each zone you will be welcomed with these shots. For each area, you'll find the Thunderhawk at a different Fort. It has been prepared for your latest mission.

Clear speech, great FX and furious action make Thunderhawk the essential CD game of the year.

Thunderhawk has taken over a year to finish, with a small production team bashing away in Core's plush Derby headquarters. The game has been designed specifically to utilise the Mega-CD capabilities; realistic terrain has been created by using rotation and banking texture-mapped ground. These scaling techniques have also been added to other objects within the game such as enemy vehicles, aircraft and trees. And Core hope that the immense effort they have put into *Thunderhawk* will be up there on the screen for all to see.

Thunderhawk, like *Jungle Strike*, is a helicopter game run over various campaigns. But *Thunderhawk* doesn't limit itself to a specific area of the world, it takes the pilot on missions around the globe. Within the ten campaigns you'll find yourself flying through vastly changing terrains, from the wilds of Alaska, protecting the bio-research bases, to the Middle East where you must defend an oil refinery that has come under attack from hostile forces.

Using a pilot's view from inside the helicopter, *Thunderhawk* has everything you'd expect for a crack pilot. Radars locate the enemy for you, weapons are easily selectable and there's even a heading indicator which shows you the course to follow to your primary targets. Accessing the game, you're given an impressive 3-D animated scene showing the chopper's capabilities and flying skills.

But are Core relying on aesthetic gloss to sell *Thunderhawk*, or is there a game to rival *Jungle Strike* hidden in that 550Mbs of disc space.

I must take my hat off to Core Design. After being completely disillusioned by their weaker titles like Chuck Rock 2 and Jaguar XJ220, I reckon this could be one the finest CD games to date. With Mega-CD games, all I normally ask for is something that couldn't be done on the Mega Drive – and, hopefully, wouldn't stand a chance of getting on a SNES. With Thunderhawk, Core have created a piece of software that I doubt you will see on any other format.

The tilt and rotation of the landscape is the first thing that makes the jaw drop; then you start to take a closer look and soon become astounded by the animations of the various ground and air vehicles. All this is great when you look over the shoulder of someone playing the game, but only when you pick up the joypad do you realise the impression of ease Core have created, as the helicopter responds directly to the slightest movement with seemingly no effort. And if the game still isn't quick enough for you, Core have included an option where you can turn off some of the graphics – it's totally unnecessary, though, as you'll find the slower mode more than quick enough.

Gameplay could seem a bit limited, as you tend to start off flying around aimlessly, firing missiles at anything you see. But this is only because the chopper just asks to be pushed to its limits, and when you've had enough zooming around, you'll find that slow and studious use of the helicopter brings more rewards in terms of progress throughout the game. And because the game is so tough and large, you'll find the simple save option a useful inclusion.

Once in a while a product comes along that boosts a machine's sales on the strength of that game alone – Kick Off (Amiga), Mario (SNES), Sonic (MD), Tetris (Game Boy), etc – Thunderhawk should do that for the Mega-CD.

DOM

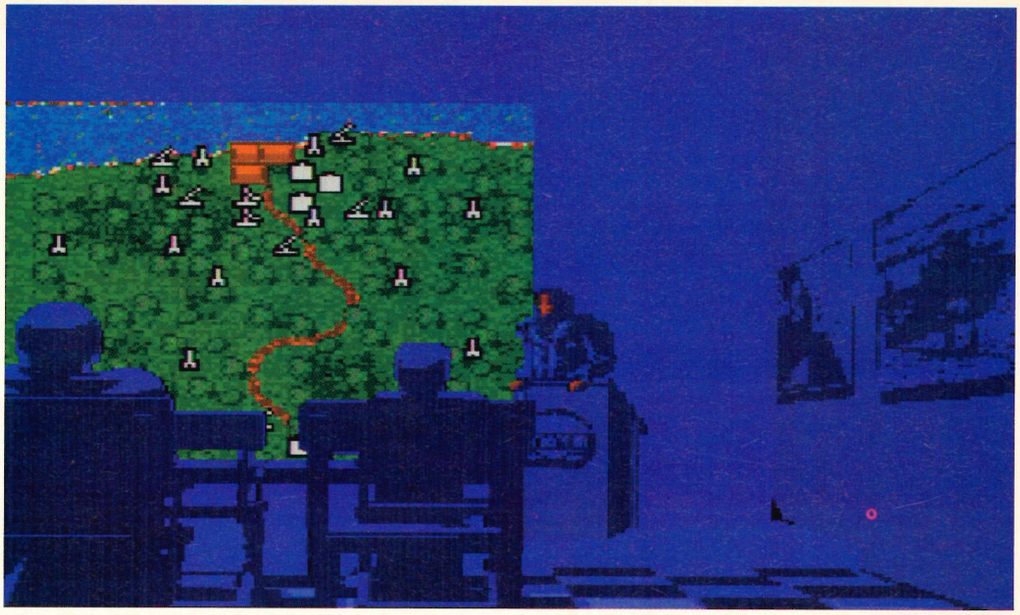
RHAWK

OVERALL 08

1. This is your altitude indicator, it warns you when you're flying too low or vice versa. It's always best to keep this around the central point, this way the height is correct.
2. This small similar indicator to the last, tells you the direction in which you are flying: too far north and you need to go back on track, and so forth.
3. Thunderhawk instantly identifies friendly or enemy ahead. In this case it's friendly, so don't destroy it or you'll lose points and fail part of your mission.
4. This provides you with a constant reminder of your armour level: the lower it goes, the more you need to panic — when it's really low, get out of there.
5. Radar detection warning light. This will alert you when an enemy is tracking you: it goes red when your exact position has been tracked and the enemy has locked on.
6. Multi-mode map camera, the map provides a video image of the current terrain with dots as targets. Target mode allows you the best time to release the weapons.
7. The radar displays all short-range threats within your current mission zone. Ground threats are red dots, air threats yellow, and missiles white.
8. Weapon selection. This displays your current weapon in use. For each mission the armoury will be reset to give you the maximum fire power.

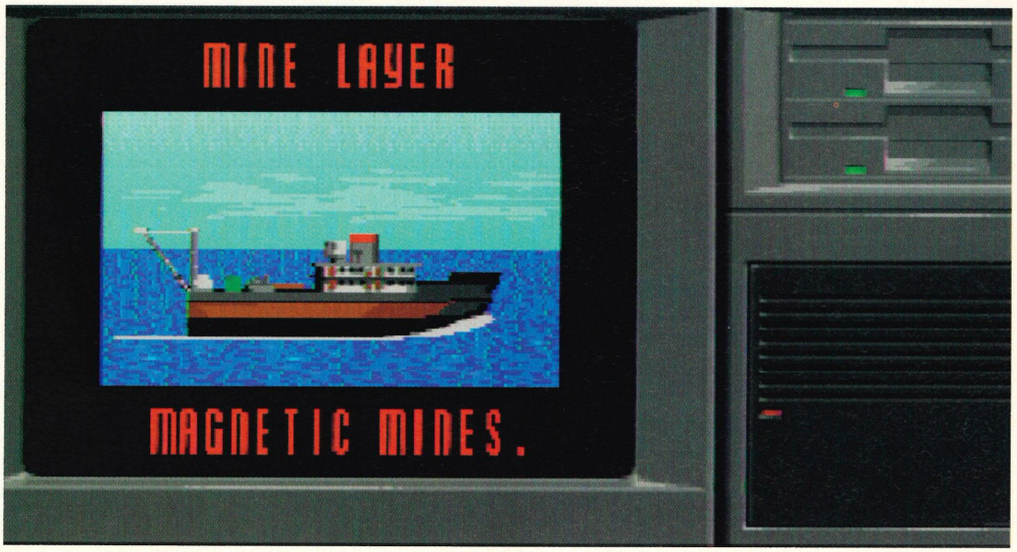
This helicopter is locked firmly in the sights, and within a few seconds will be blown clean out of the skies. The locked warning only appears when you are locked onto your target and there's a 99% chance you're going to blow it to pieces. I have the rockets set on Thunderhawk for this. This obviously makes it a lot quicker but I could destroy it using the guns: this is slightly longer and by the time I've started firing the helicopter could have vanished from my sights. The quickest way is to use a missile but you don't really want to use those. Save them for the main targets of your mission.

Thunderhawk has its targets set firmly in sight, this time they're armoured personnel vehicles driving through the wilds of Alaska. The helicopter has the missiles ready and is just waiting for the locked sign to flash on screen. The problem in Alaska is that radio contact has been lost with our (meaning friendly forces) bio-research bases. Intelligence has already been behind enemy lines and have identified the forces. The Thunderhawk has been sent in to regain control and destroy any captured materials. It's your job to locate and destroy these forces before they carry out more damage. Flying across the snow and ice floats of Alaska, your visibility will be limited, but this is a real test of your pilot skills.



In the debriefing room you'll be told of your mission. A map shows you all the areas which need to be attacked, with the primary and secondary targets your main objective. If you complete all your missions successfully you'll return to this room for a presentation of medals. After each mission you'll return here to be debriefed on your next mission.

There are ten campaigns which must be undertaken, with their own unique enemy and flying conditions altering in each war zone. The campaigns vary from guarding UN convoys to protecting shipping lanes from enemy attack. The areas are topical to the extent of following closely the trouble spots within the world, for example the Middle East and Eastern Europe.



These screens identify the enemy that you will confront in the following campaigns. A flick through these screens will alert you as the Thunderhawk pilot of the dangers you'll have to face and destroy. You have the mine layer: these patrol the shipping lanes depositing mines in order to cripple ships, even down to scud missile launchers — all must be destroyed for a successful mission.

FIREPOWER AT YOUR DISPOSAL

A brief guide to the weapons that are installed on the Thunderhawk, and the damage they can cause.

GUNS

The guns are the most plentiful of all the weapons that you have. When the missiles and rockets run out (which is pretty quickly) you're left with the guns, your weakest weapon.

MISSILES

Only 16 of these high-quality missiles are installed on the helicopter. They need to be used with great care as there are no more until the next mission. Use on secondary targets.

ROCKETS

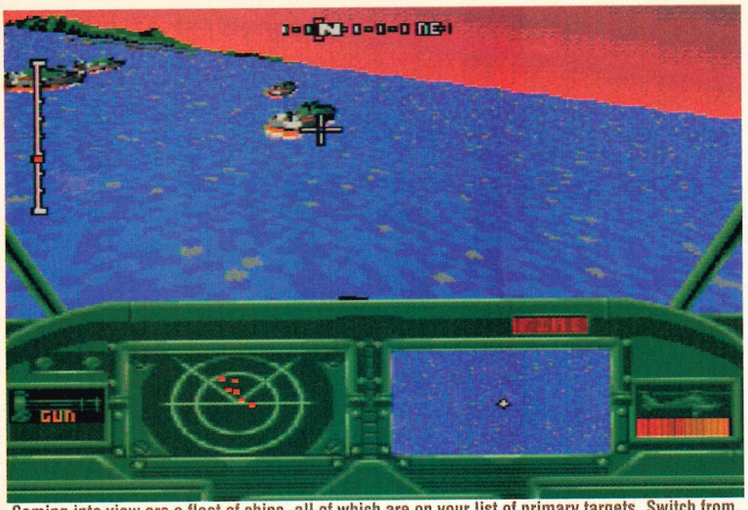
With 60 issued, the rockets are a powerful force for any enemy you come into contact with. Again use sparingly as once they're gone you won't be issued with any more until next mission.

It's big and it's difficult: something that most games lack. With Thunderhawk, Core seem to have the balance just right, and it certainly sets it up for an addictive game. The graphics are reminiscent of a PC game, and give it a quick, arcade feel. The music and sound effects are pretty good, the FX of the weapons being of very high quality.

The game's outstanding feature is undoubtedly the gameplay. Thunderhawk proves to be a great challenge, even for the best gamesplayers on normal difficulty. With each campaign containing five sub-missions, you can be assured of countless hours of challenge, and having only the one life really pushes you to the edge.

Thunderhawk is the route in which the CD market should be going, and if Core keep it up , they will be in for a tidy sum come the end of next year.

STEVE



Coming into view are a fleet of ships, all of which are on your list of primary targets. Switch from guns to rockets and place them accurately into the side of the ships. Gunfire would take too long to destroy these ships, but don't waste all your rockets in trying to dispose of them.

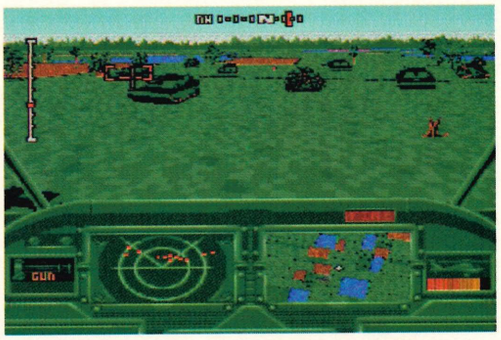
This is the game that Mega-CD owners have been waiting for. Forget the disappointing slog that was Silpheed, this is the first totally playable game and finally the capabilities of the hardware are being revealed. Clear, cohesive speech, great sound effects and furious action make Thunderhawk the essential CD game of the year so far.

At first the sheer speed of the game and the complexity and realism of the graphics leave you floundering in your cockpit and shooting at everything in sight, but by the time you reach the later missions you learn to pick your primary targets carefully and select the weapons most suitable to the task. All the time your co-pilot is yelling instructions in your ears and hostile aircraft and missiles are rocketing past you. If you get hit, your craft judders and bullet holes begin to appear in your windshield, and despite all this attention to detail the screen update never slows down and the pace of the action never slacks off.

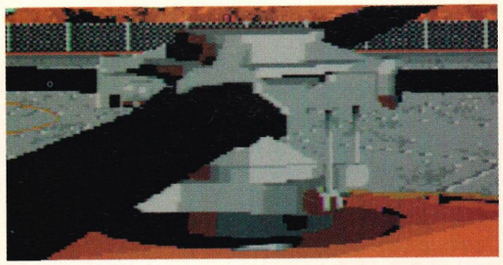
More of a shoot-'em-up than a flight sim, this a game to suit adrenaline junkies and at last shines some light onto a path away from lengthy interactive movie titles and could herald a new era of exciting, firebutton-pumping action for CD players everywhere.

DAVE

Thunderhawk creating severe damage around the skies of South East Asia. Scoring direct hits on a number of targets, the radar map shows that there are bandits at one o'clock, so be prepared for more action. If you're out of missiles and rockets at this stage, you'll have to resort to guns. The enemy become more of a problem with guns as they are harder to destroy.



The top picture shows you approaching a huge amount of tanks, this is a real danger so hopefully you're a top pilot. The bottom picture shows the helicopter cruising across Alaska, searching.



According to this, I was the last person to die in action, along with all the other members of Core Design. If you crash, which I'm sure you will, your name will appear on this screen.

INSTANT ACCESS

THUNDERHAWK

CORE
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GAMEPLAY	08
GRAPHICS	08
SOUND	07
ADDICTION	08

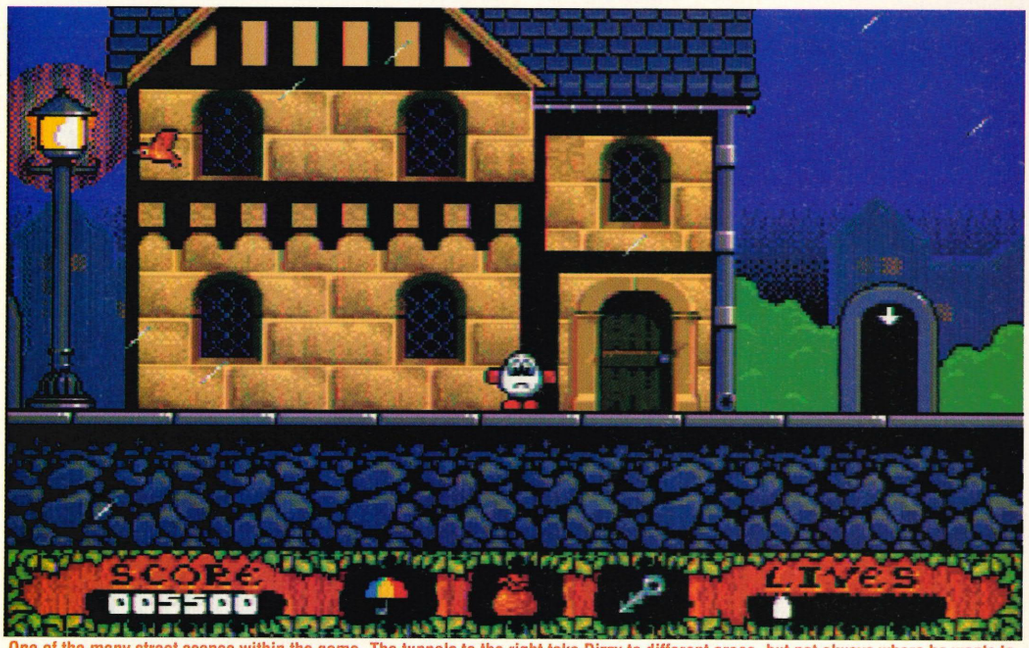
OVERALL 08

10 09 08 07 06 05 04 03 02 01

JUNGLE STRIKE | THUNDERHAWK | COBRA COMMAND

In the cemetry Dizzy finds himself surrounded by not only coffins but all sorts of scary creatures. He can jump onto the platforms to collect the stars but he must also watch out for the birds and obstacles that are going to get in his way. The tree in the background might look scary but it doesn't do anything — to get around this level keep your eyes skinned and keep jumping.

Right at the very start, if you're getting a bit stuck with the controls, then a picture of the Mega Drive joypad will appear on screen and basically show you what you have to do if you're stuck. Ah, how kind.



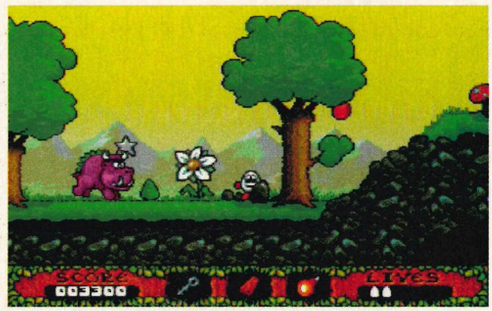
One of the many street scenes within the game. The tunnels to the right take Dizzy to different areas, but not always where he wants to go. Often these streets are blocked off by a large wall and the only way to go is back through the tunnel. Try to work out if any of the objects that you've got can be used to find a way out. For example on one section you have to give a pirate a barrel of rum, so think logically: you have an umbrella, a bag and a key — any suggestions?

The useful pictures courtesy of Codemasters make sure that Dizzy is foolproof. It's a nice touch, so thumbs up for the consideration from them. Obviously this is all self-explanatory, but even if you can't work out the controls, you will after playing the game for about five minutes. The only worry is which object goes where, but that's the fun bit.

Codemasters aren't ones to escape the headlines. With their successful court case against Nintendo in America, you'd expect this company to be going places. But it is only now, months after they collected the cash, that Codemasters are really getting noticed for what they do – not what Nintendo said they shouldn't.

The Dizzy series has already been on everything from the Spectrum and C64 to the PC and SNES, and its tried and tested formula has already guaranteed them over three million Dizzy carts and disks out there.

The Sega incarnation, *Fantastic Dizzy*, is a huge game that covers a variety of gamesplaying tasks. Basically, it's a platform game with loads of puzzle-solving. It has a cartoon style of play with an arcade feel. The eponymous Dizzy has learned that the evil wizard Zaks has cast a spell over his homeland and turned all the creatures into nasty



This wild boar will attack you, the only way to prevent certain death is to throw the ham at it (if you didn't see the ham, it's on the approach way). The boar will eat the ham (the cannibal) and then run away.

If you're between 12 and 16, and you love puzzle-solving you will find no better game than Fantastic Dizzy

Fantastic Dizzy

With Codemasters' Micro Machines grabbing the coveted top spot in the charts in July, the Darling Buds of Warwick have now released their notorious eggy adventure. Still feeling, er, dizzy from last month's deadlines, Stevie Bough sets the timer to three minutes...

fiends. To make matters worse, Dizzy's girlfriend Daisy is held captive in a castle in the clouds. The plot does sound somewhat familiar, but the style and layout of the game gives it that extra something.

Instead of moving from level to level, Dizzy must wander the kingdom, which is massive, and interact with characters that he'll meet along the way. These bods will help or hinder Dizzy. Objects that Dizzy will find along the route enable him to get past certain characters that block his way. For example, you'll meet a pirate and the only way to get past him is to give him a barrel of rum, which he'll readily drink and then vanish giving you access passed him. Most of the objects that you find do something, so you'll have to work out what you do with them. For instance, a spade you'll use to dig or a plank of wood might be used as a bridge.

Dizzy's health is shown in a damage bar; the more you get hit the more the damage goes up. You can decrease the damage bar by eating fruit. With only three lives, and considering the game is so big, the challenge is great.

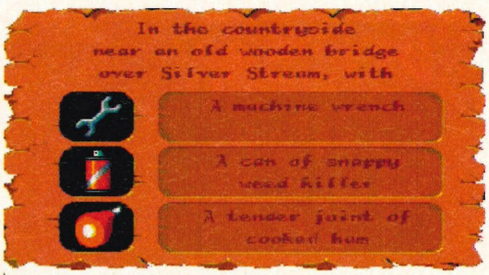
Fantastic Dizzy is truly a large and difficult game. Considering its success on other formats, it comes as no surprise that this has been transferred to the Mega Drive. But is it just a bit of a tired old format for the CD-hungry Mega Drive?

OVERALL 07

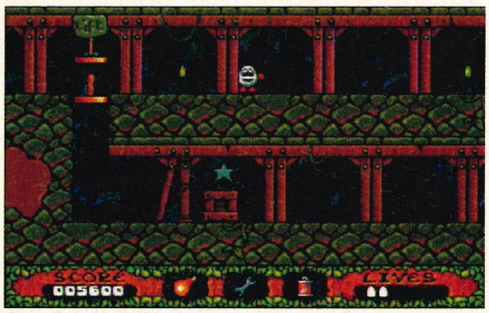
I don't know what it is – perhaps there's something in the air – but nearly every game we've had in this month has lacked that all-important element, originality. (Or perhaps it has taken till now for me to realise that only one in 50 games on the Mega Drive has this anyway...) I wasn't looking forward to Fantastic Dizzy, as I'd already seen the little one's adventures on both 8-bit computer and console and 16-bit computer. The reason I've seen all the conversions isn't because I'm particularly partial to arcade adventures, but purely because you can't ignore the little fella, he's everywhere!

If you're between 12 and 16, and you love puzzle-solving arcade adventures, you will find no better game than Fantastic Dizzy on the Mega Drive. It's big, colourful, logical and addictive. If you don't fall into this category,. and want something on the Mega Drive which you wouldn't be able to convert to another machine, Dizzy is just the game you want to avoid. What Dizzy sets out to do, it does admirably: but this certainly doesn't help the diminishing diversity of Sega software in the UK.

DOM



This is your inventory, the only problem with this isthat you can only carry three items at a time, so you'll have to drop off your least important item. On here we've already seen the ham's use, whereas the weed killer and the wrench have yet to be.



Dizzy finds himself in the mines, the green slime dripping from the ceiling creates a dent on Dizzy's energy so make sure you avoid contact with it. The lift will operate but some of these lifts will need a key, these are located within the mines.

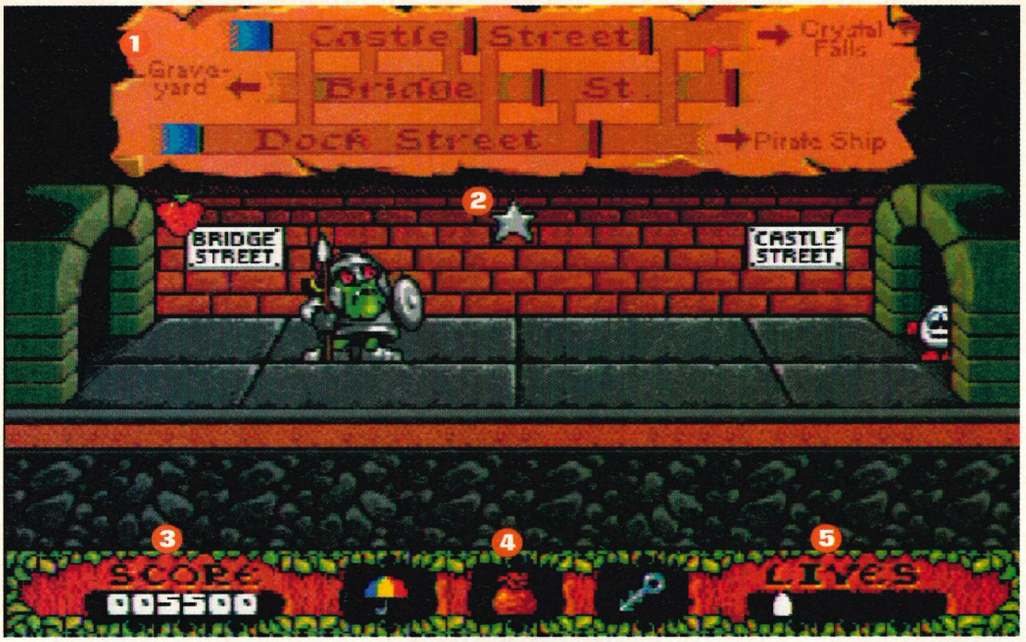
The Dizzy games seem to have been with us since the creation of the home computer itself. Unfortunately they don't seem to have evolved much from that day either. When you buy a Dizzy game you always know what you are going to get. For fans of the games this may be a benefit, but for those of us who like a bit of a surprise for our 40 quid, something a bit special, it's not.

You can't fault Fantastic Dizzy for its gameplay, there's plenty to do here, lots of puzzles to solve and massive play areas to explore. However, it all lacks any real sparkle. There's nothing that makes you laugh, nothing that makes you gasp and nothing to keep you coming back for more. The whole experience is very cerebral and as a result is short on excitement and very short on gloss.

The Dizzy sprite is tiny and extremely simple – yes, I know he's an egg, but take a look at Cool Spot if you want to see how a potentially uninteresting object can be showered with charisma and brought to life. As far as sound goes, I have a talking calculator that would give me more fun than this soundtrack. Plinky-plinky would best describe it.

This is your bog-standard platform game and two years ago it might have been impressive. Only the thought and time involved in solving the problems keeps its head above the water. Be careful.

DAVE



1. The map of the street section of the game: as is fairly obvious, the guard is blocking your passage. To get past, give him the bag of money in your inventory.
2. The stars. As you know by now, you have to collect 250 of these to officially complete the game and that means finding every star possible — not easy.
3. The score. This isn't the sort of game where the score is massively important, but nevertheless you still want to get a respectable total.
4. The inventory: the umbrella which you'll have to work out what to do with, the money that you give to the guard and the key which it's advisable to keep.
5. Unfortunately, I only have one life left. The trouble is that when you lose a life you have to return right back to the start, and go all that way again.

Dizzy is a pleasant surprise. The Dizzy sprite is a little small, but that's no great hang-up. The diversity within the game is what pleased me. All the sections are different, and you don't have to keep plodding through a level just to confront a guardian. The music, however, is a major disappointment – jolly music rarely works in games like this. The puzzles offered are good fun to work out; they are not mind-numbingly hard, so you don't have to break down in tears every time you're stuck with an object.

Dizzy is good to look at, with lots of effort being made to ensure backgrounds and characters don't look blocky. The animation is excellent, and the pace at which the game is played means it doesn't get boring. Novel ideas such as the extra life being a puzzle add beneficial touches to the game. Overall, it's a thumbs up for Dizzy; the game will undoubtedly sell on its reputation – and deservedly so.

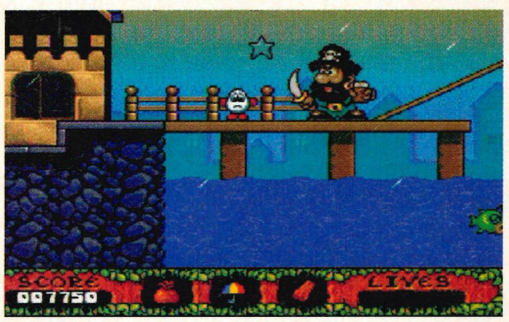
STEVE

SORT YOUR LIFE OUT!

This is certainly novel, instead of collecting an extra life in the ordinary fashion, Codemasters have come up with a puzzle that you must solve.

The timer's turned over and you now have about 40 seconds to piece this back together. Fail to do so and you don't collect your extra life. The first time is tricky but you get used to it.

Well, I managed to do it and still had time to spare. Continuing with the puzzle theme, the idea for an extra life is certainly novel, and makes a refreshing change — nice one!



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FANTASTIC DIZZY

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GAMEPLAY	07
GRAPHICS	07
SOUND	04
ADDICTION	07

OVERALL
07

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POWER challeng

THE CHAMP

Name: .....Dave "The Kid" Perry
Representing: .....good
Position:.....on top
Age: .....golden
Favourite MD game:
.....NHLPA Hockey (forever)
Most favoured game in challenge:
.....Pit-Fighter
Special abilities:
..... Arnie Terminator boots that intimidate his opponents.

It seems that nothing can stop The Kid as he cuts his way through the ranks of the industry's PR people like a hot knife through butter. This month both Sega's Andrew Wright and Acclaim's Darren Lee wiggled at the last minute after accepting the gauntlet thrown down by our console warrior. "Won't anybody play me?" Dave cried. "I will..."said the brave Anna Macario. The rest, as they say, is history...

RULES

Three games produced by the software house the guest is representing.
One game to be chosen by the challenger.
One game to be chosen by The Kid.
One game as yet unseen by both players.
Each player is informed of the other's game one week prior to the contest.
Each game is played until one player has won two contests.

CHALLENGER

Name: .....Anna 'fingers' Macario
Representing: .....Domark
Position:.....PR Manager
Age:.....over 25
Favourite MD games:
.....F1, Davis Cup Tennis
Most favoured game in challenge:
.....Davis Cup
Special abilities:
..... lightning firebutton fingers

RULES

A very special challenge this one as The Kid had only played one of the games prior to Anna's arrival. Would his raw gaming talent win through or could this be the day that our industry champion finally meets his match.

Pit-Fighter
Three games including grudge match. Person with the most points wins.

F1
Six laps of Silverstone against a full field. The player finishing in the highest position wins.

Davis cup
One set.

The Kid's choice
Pit-Fighter
One of the first really impressive Mega Drive beat'em-ups, *Pit-Fighter* is a no-holds barred fight to the death. The players can pick up various items, like knives and crates, in order to inflict as much damage as possible upon their opponents. Released early last year this is the oldest game in the challenge and both opponents will take individual goes at trashing the computer controlled fighters on the first three levels. Anna carelessly let slip that she had been practising this one all night and admits to being quietly confident. The Kid refused to comment, simply tightening his bandanna and gritting his teeth.

Anna Macario's choice
Davis Cup
"I'm unbeaten on this one," Anna jeered. The Kid looked visibly rattled having never even seen the game before and having just been on the end of a Wimbledon defeat by Dom. It would seem that the cards were firmly stacked in favour of the cocky Miss. Macario for this Tennis challenge. Not even allowed to practise, it would seem that only sheer blood and guts determination could pull The Kid through this centre court battle extraordinaire. The crafty Anna put our diminutive champion off further by reminding him of Domark's cheeky new advertisement for the game. As Dave dreamed, Anna called for new balls. Foul!

Secret choice
F1
Domark's big game this year, *F1* was an essential choice for the challenge, in fact Jo at Domark has been constantly calling Dave to try and get him to play it in a challenge. Unusually playable for a Grand Prix racing game, F1 really tests a gamesplayer's concentration to the full as even the slightest slip up can result in you and car crashing at over a hundred miles an hour into a trackside obstacle...ouch! Neither player seemed particularly confident about this choice, although by now Anna had become very cagey about spouting about her games playing prowess out loud. Patriotic to the end both decided to race upon Britain's number one track, Silverstone, against a full field of computer-controlled opponents in what promised to be an interesting test of nerve.

Any last words...

"I'll win easily because I am Domark's undefeated champion and I reckon The Kid's about ready for a fall. It's about time somebody took him down a peg or two!"

It certainly seems that it's the women in the PR world who have all the guts.

Pit-fighter

Anna's brutality

No dithering for the girl from the big city. She went straight to the option screen, selected Buzz the wrestler, and prepared herself to do some serious damage in fight one. Anna tore into her first opponent with a frightening determination and at one point it actually looked like it might all be over too soon. Domark's answer to Cynthia Rothrock flipped this way and that proving that all those late nights were not wasted as she pulled off special move after special move. The Kid could only sit and watch as The Executioner was pummelled into submission with lightning efficiency and Miss. Macario ended the first round with £11380.

Round two proved to be a slightly different story. The gung-ho tactics of our challenger came a bit of a cropper on the agile Southside. As the two traded blows the computer character picked up a knife and promptly began stabbing the stunned Anna. As she moved away to try and counter, several swift kicks sent her lifeforce diving and shock, horror, Domark's champion lost her first life. Fired up by the audacity of her adversary the rejuvenated Anna returned in fine form picking up her helpless opponent and hurling him into the crowd. A brief skirmish later and it was all over. Round two: £23060

Grudge match time as Buzz meets Buzz in a brutal confrontation that is decided by the first to achieve three knockdowns. Back to her awesome best Anna sniffed with contempt as her opponent did his best to fend off her lethal combinations. It was all over almost as soon as it had begun. Anna Macario ended her round of the first challenge with £38560, and that would take some beating.

The Kid's brutality

Flexing his finely toned biceps The Console Kid took his place in front of the monitor screen. Canny as ever our champion chose the kickboxing Ty as his character. "Speed and accuracy are the secret to fighting games," he exclaimed. "Brawn is all very well, but you can't hit what you can't catch," He jeered. The atmosphere was becoming electric as the game loaded and The Kid plugged in his trusty Power Clutch.

A shaky start saw The Kid fumbling for a few desperate moments trying to work out what button did what before flying into the hapless Executioner with all the verocity of an injured wolf. The battle did not go smoothly with The Kid obviously struggling to find any rhythm and instead of the stunning special moves that we'd seen Domark's champion unleash he relied heavily on speed punching and midriff kicks. The tactic proved effect though as The Kid's dedication to speed and finesse soon cut chunks out of The Executioner's life bar and several deft blows later the big lug was eating dust. The Kid's first round score: £10900. Behind but learning fast.

Round two was a totally different story. Learning from his mistakes Power's bandanna-wearing champion made straight for the knife that sat on the ground between him and Southside. First there, he was clearly now in the driving seat as he drove his adversary back into the hostile crowd with a number of well-timed thrusts of his blade, surely his brutality bonus would be higher this time round. But, just as it seemed he was heading for a super-fast win he was disarmed and pounded by a revitalised computer opponent. All seemed grim until a trusty crate came to his rescue.

Don't look so sad Anna. The challenge has only just begun. There'll be plenty of time for looking sad later after The Kid has really warmed up.

The Kid quickly hoisted it above his head and hurled it into Southside. Bang, bang, bang and it was all over...but was it enough? £22660. Still behind, only a perfect final round could save The Kid from a first game defeat.

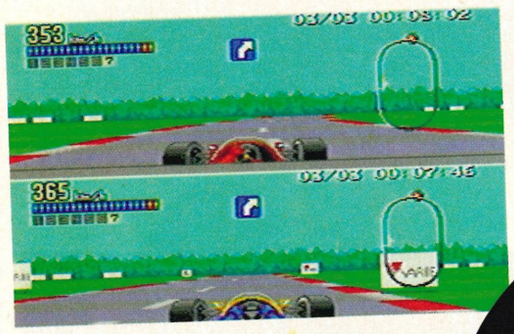
The Grudge match, and boy did he ever have a grudge. As soon as the round began The Kid shot across the screen and with a devastating flurry sent the rival Ty sprawling, then, as soon as he got up, a quick combination saw him crumple to the ground again. by now it was all academic, a perfect final round from a fired up Kid and a battling first game victory.

Final score: Anna Macario £38560 The Kid £38660

POWER challenge

F1

Once again The Kid appealed for a chance to practice on Domark's new grand prix racing game. Not a lover of racing games, the general feeling in the office was that this was where The Kid was going to get his come uppance. The venue was to be Silverstone and both competitors had to undergo time



trials to decide their grid positions for the start of the race. As they screamed off, it seemed apparent that this was going to be a most unusual formula one confrontation with both drivers struggling to get to grips with their powerful cars as they slid around the tight corners of Britain's top racing track. Anna had opted for the more grippy medium softness tyres whilst The Kid was going all out for speed with his selection of hard tyres, this meant he was sliding about more but had the advantage of not having to worry about the wearing effects of the corners so much.

Neither driver impressed in these early stages, with Anna taking sixteenth position on the grid and The Kid fifteenth. It was going to be a long six laps.

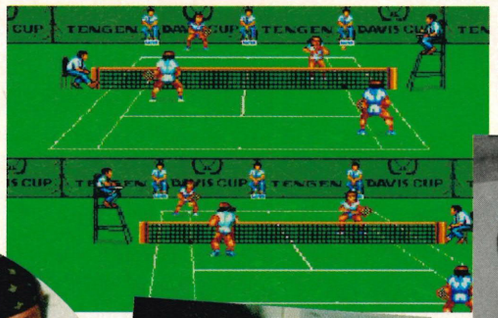
Ready, steady...both drivers got of to good starts with Anna taking control early on as The Kid got stuck behind a crowd of other cars and was forced to wait patiently for the opportunity to overtake. As time went on it became apparent that the flying Miss Macario's reckless approach to the race was not going to prove too wise in the long run. There didn't seem to be a pylon or sign that she hadn't hit by the end of the second lap and her car was beginning to look decidedly poorly. The Kid on the other hand had been slowly nudging his way up the field, braking cautiously into the bends, over-taking tenaciously on the straights and now he shot past a stranded Anna as she steered her beaten up car back onto the track for the umpteenth time. Lap three and The Kid was in fifth place, Domark's champion however had slipped into tenth and was fading fast, a number of unprintable expletives began to turn the air in the Mega Power offices blue as it seemed very obvious that the gutsy Anna was getting her ass kicked!

This was confirmed on lap five, by now The Kid was pulling away from the crowd in first position and looked set to win the whole thing in style. As he lapped the shell-shocked Anna for the second time it seemed that her last reserves of bulldog spirit gave way and in an attempt to catch him up slid uncontrollably of the track for the final time, hitting a rather large metal sign and totally writing off her car. That was it, game over for poor old Domark.

Final Result: Anna retired The Kid 1st position. Best lap; The Kid 1'23"36

Davis Cup Tennis

With the Power Challenge now won by the seemingly unbeatable Kid, all that was left to play for on this final game was Anna's pride. Domark's latest baby, Davis Cup is a game that Anna had been playing endlessly for the past



week as she showed it off to various magazines, it was also a game The Kid knew only for the naughty new advert that accompanied it. Not good training for someone who has to face a fired up PR person.

The first shock for The Kid was the unnerving split-screen view and before you could say "strawberries and cream" Miss Macario quickly chose to play as the number one seed, it was clear that she meant business.

Overly casual in his approach to the final game The Kid sent his first serve into the net as he experimented with the control method. It seemed that this challenge would go the same as the former two as he seemed to quickly come to grips with the buttons and smashed his way into a forty-love lead. Beginner's luck? You'd better believe it. As the battle heightened and the rallies got fiercer and fiercer, it became apparent that The Kid had not mastered the controls at all and was visibly struggling to hit a decent shot back to the towering Domark ace. Discovering an option that allowed him to protest against the umpire's decision The Kid slowly lost all control and became involved in a number of bitter exchanges with the judges.

A one set challenge, it was not until he was four games down that the Kid actually won a game. This only proved to be a temporary respite though as any hopes of a comeback were quickly squashed by the crushing powerplay of the hyped up Miss Macario. Never at ease with the distracting split-screen perspective of the game, this was The Kid biggest ever defeat and he could do little to hide his disappointment at being beaten so soundly. Would it have been different had he practised the game before the challenge? Probably, but nothing could rob the jubilant Anna Macario of this auspicious moment as she span cartwheels around the Mega Power offices. She had lost the Power Challenge but she had given our champion a scare or two.

Final Score: Miss Macario 6 The Kid 1

RESPECT TO ANNA MACARIO

Without doubt the pluckiest of our challengers, Anna came here to win and seemed prepared to do just about anything to achieve her goal [The Kid still has bruised ribs from her off-putting elbow jabs]. Not letting our champion practice any of the games before she arrived was obviously a devious tactic but it's all down to how you play on the day and Anna has earned a lot of credibility in these offices.

UNSTOPPABLE GAMES ANIMAL!

The Kid just goes from great to outstanding. Shrugging off all opposition he continues his meteoric rise to the top of the industry's games players. Taking on all-comers the only question left to ask is...who's next? Not one for self promotion Mega Power's steely-eyed joypad commando only had these few words to offer:

"I can understand why these PR types are starting to make excuses, they're shaking in their boots, running scared. I can't be stopped, I've told you all before, I'll crush anybody who dares to cross my path!"

NEXT FIGHT

Who'll be next? It seems that The Kid is running out of viable challengers already. Will the elusive Andrew Wright of Sega pick up the gauntlet, or will Acclaim's own 'Dragon', Darren Lee, take this opportunity to shut our mouths once and for all. We'll have to wait and see...

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Password: JSSCTS

Bubsy looking as cool as ever. The banana crate to the left needn't be disturbed, but bounce on the tree to the left of Bubsy's head and it will take you to loads and loads of yarn. More yarn can be found down the pipe to the right but you do run the danger of drowning if you miss a jump. Mind the lid that flies off the pipe: if this hits you, you die and you don't want that, do you?

A few essentials are worth remembering in order to succeed at Bubsy. Firstly, look around everywhere; there are so many places to go that you might find something extra. Avoid the water, however deep this will kill you instantly. To jump higher, hold down the jump button and you'll get those few extra inches. Lastly, make sure you collect all the T-shirts you can find. Extra lives are imperative as it only takes one hit for Bubsy to die. You'll start with nine lives but these soon go.

Bubsy starts off in a forest occupied by wild beasts and tons of yarn. Firstly make your way to the right and bounce on the dogs' head. Where you see the red exclamation mark, touch it – this will act as a restart point, so whenever you die you won't go back to the start but return to the restart point. Progressing to the right, you'll see an underground pipe. The lid will blow off the top at intervals; don't get hit by this as you'll die. There's loads of yarn to be collected so drop down and pick it up – beware of the water. Returning to the surface, stay on the rooftops where you'll find ample yarn and also an extra life and an invincibility. Keep moving right on the level and drop underground where you see it. Here you'll find a two T-shirt extra lives and a continue. Collect these and find the big yarn ball, indicating level over.

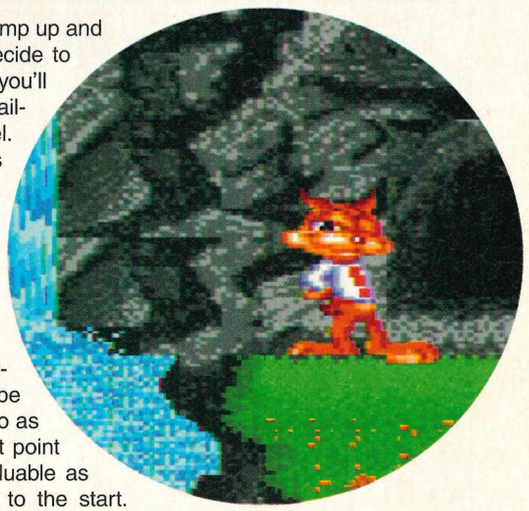
FORBIDDEN PLUMMET

Password: CKBGMM

This level starts with loads of water slides. The problem with these water slides is that you can't control the direction. At the start immediately go left, drop down and collect the extra lives. Remember to hold RIGHT as you're zooming down or else you'll just die. A useful tip to remember is to glide, using button A, as this will prevent you from splatting on the floor. Bounce from the platforms inside the cave and follow the natural route. Where you see the second cave enter the tunnel, which will teleport you back to the first cave. Re-enter immediately and you'll see a secret bonus level. There are fire slides where the object is to collect as many yarn balls as you can; when you die you'll be returned to the spot you left the level. As you progress right along this level take great care not to run into the anvil crates which will knock you out. Banana crates create a slippery surface, and flying saucers have a knock-out effect. Don't go mad and you'll reach the end safely.

A BRIDGE TOO FAR

Password: SCTWMN



At the start immediately jump up and collect the yarn. If you decide to ride on the water slides you'll miss all the goodies available on the bottom level. On the water slides there's tons of yarn, but again no control on direction. On the bottom level the watery platforms are very slippy, so be cautious not to fall in. As well as encountering the treachery of the platforms, the dogs will be throwing eggs at Bubsy, so as soon as you see a restart point hit it. This will prove invaluable as you don't want to return to the start. With three separate areas to explore – water level, ground and in the sky – have plenty of places to find items. The best bet is to try the tunnels to see where they take you. Some take you back on yourself, whereas others can take you near the end of the level. When you finally reach the end, you'll be faced with your first guardian. They aren't really that much of a problem. Two flying saucers will come down, holding balls of yarn. Dodge the yarn and when the face appears on the saucer, bounce on the top, doing this twice will destroy them.

FAIR CONDITIONING

Password: MKBRLN

Entering into a fairground world Bubsy must contest with jumping killer hot-dogs. Move right slightly until you come to a "test your strength" machine and bounce Bubsy off the bell. He will fly into the air and find to his delight a black T-shirt. From here keep going to the right and jump across the platforms; follow them upwards where you'll find a teleport tunnel. Teleport will take you to the roller-coaster, which you should ride, but beware as the track separates so make sure you're ready to jump before you plummet to Earth. Off the roller-coaster, you need to go high up. From the top you'll see two spaceships, jump into the second one and go up until you see the red platform. From here you'll see a tunnel, so enter this and you'll find yourself in a secret bonus level. Coming out of this, keep going right, but avoid falling to the ground because it's covered with fireworks and drawing pins. You'll see the end point, guarded by dogs, so bounce on them and hit the yarn.

THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE WOOLIES

Password: STGRTN

A cowboy/western setting for this zone. The opening shot shows Bubsy riding a train. Jump up onto the carriage, taking care to avoid being hit by the small dog statues. If you slip or jump off the train you'll fall between the tracks and die, so look before you leap. As you move to the right collecting the yarn, beware of the dogs. The variety offered is that of firing eggs or just being obstructive, which they're very good at. Moving along you'll find carriages containing giraffes. In the air you'll see some yarn. To reach this bounce off the giraffe's neck and fly across, collecting the yarn as you go. Crates of tacks and bananas await if you fall onto them. You must make sure you time your jumps carefully. When you find the coal train you know you're near the end. Unfortunately there will be dogs waiting for you; time your jumps and land on their heads. At the end you won't see a big yarn ball, you'll just enter the driver's compartment and pull a switch.

Into the canyon

Instead of going onto the next level you'll go into a sub-level where you'll find yourself in the desert. Basically this is like another level containing bonuses and extra lives. You can still die, though! Underground beavers will slap you with their tails so avoid this. After each completion of the normal chapters on this zone you'll go into the canyon. It is a good opportunity to collect bonuses, but it's just as easy to die as it is on the normal levels.

NIGHT OF THE BOBCAT

Password: LBLNRD

Immediately you'll see a roller-coaster to ride and find yarn galore. Get ready to jump out as the track gives way. Jumping from the coaster, and run down the track holding in the opposite direction so as to slow Bubsy down. Mid-way through you'll see another of those infamous tunnels, which will teleport you through this level so as to avoid losing a life. Obviously if you're going for a points score it's not worth teleporting, but the danger is abundant. Whichever option you choose you'll have to get back on the roller-coaster, as this is the most effective means to completing this level. There are yarn balls, dogs and extra lives hidden up there somewhere. Look to see where there is a platform, as it will indicate a new place to explore, and no doubt hold bonus items. Follow the track, hitting the restart point, bounce off the dogs taking care not to hit a drawing pin crate and you are on your way home.

OUR FURLESS LEADER

Password: JMDKRK

Bubsy the cheeky bobcat looking at you as if to say "Do you think I'm stupid?" Well, we know he's not: the T-shirt is an extra life. Running right from here you'll find crates of drawing pins and fireworks, so make sure you stay off ground level.

Right from the start, jump onto the "test your strength" machine and bounce high into the air. Collect the extra life that is waiting for you, then drop down to the bottom to find another extra life. Again the option is to teleport across, mainly to avoid losing a life. If you decide not to follow the natural course of this level, you'll encounter similar difficulties to the previous levels. To teleport the farthest, choose the red platform very close to the start of the level. It will zoom you right across avoiding all the nasties that are out to kill you. Being the end of the second zone means you'll have to face a guardian. More saucers so use your bobcat skills to avoid being hit by them. They will fly around trying their utmost to kill you. When the opportunity is right, you'll know because the saucer has a face. Bounce on it and after about four hits, they will explode and the zone ends.

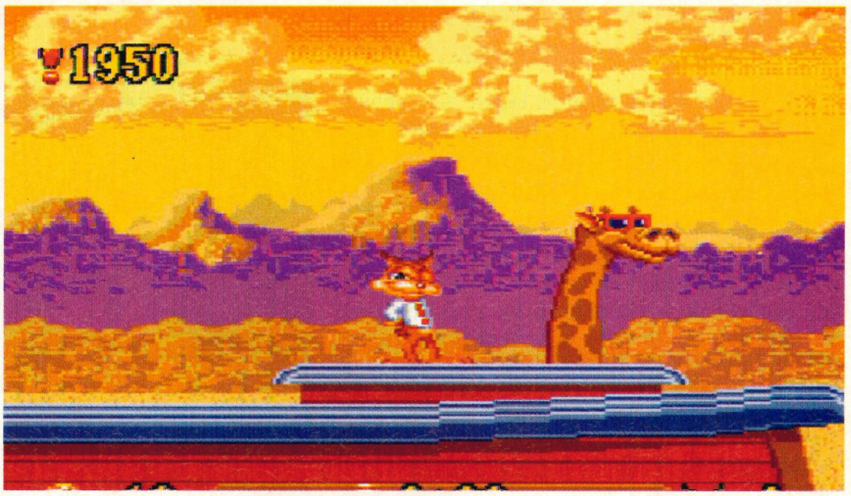
A FISTFUL OF YARN

Password: SBBSHC

This is pretty much the same as the last stage, basically you'll move across the train avoiding and collecting yarn. You'll immediately find two extra lives. Jump across the carriages to collect and then progress right. If you slip into a carriage which undoubtedly you will, because there's yarn there, you'll find sand sharks ready to chomp at your feet. There will be a moving platform which will let you escape unscathed. Avoid the same dilemmas as last time and again when you see the coal carriage you're ready to go into the canyon.

Into the canyon

Back in the canyon you'll encounter the same sort of obstacles. At the start go left and drop down, holding RIGHT as you do so. Enter the cave and collect the extra lives that are waiting for you. Progress through bouncing and gliding your way along. Find the holes where you see gun -hooting beavers and drop down, to find yarn and a continue.



Whatever next, a giraffe with shades! Above his head is yarn all ready for Bubsy to collect. Use the giraffe's head to bounce off, but be careful not just to run into him as this has the adverse effect of causing your death. Also, when leaving this carriage make sure you get a good jump otherwise you'll fall into the unknown.

DANCES WITH WOOLIES

Password: DBKRRB

At the immediate start, stay ducked to avoid the eggs that are being constantly hurled by the dogs. Time your jump, there is a space after the third egg's been thrown and bounce on their heads. Move forward to the right and collect the black T-shirt and the extra life. Keep going to the right and jump on the saucer before it gets you.

Into the canyon

Again find the coal carriage and enter the canyon, one more trip through this baron wilderness and you'll leave this blissful zone for good. The guardian you'll find at the end comprises three saucers that zoom around your head. You must avoid these, which means ducking and plenty of jumping. Again land on the top of the saucers, and after several hits they will blow up, leaving you to go to the next zone.

BEAVERY CAREFUL

Password: MSFCTS

From the start move right and go to the lower level where waiting for you will be a T-shirt with two extra lives. Moving again to the right drop onto the green platforms and wait for the log raft to come along. Jump onto the raft and go with the flow. Stay at the water level and when you reach the restart point go up. You'll encounter jumping fish and weird lizard fish in the water. The lizard fish need avoiding, but you can't jump on them because you'll drown. The flying fish can be killed but the jump needs to be timed to perfection. Going up after the restart point will take you to an invincibility. This probably doesn't sound like much, but hopefully you'll be able to reach the next restart point. Up above you'll see log cabins which hold entrances to tunnels. It's advisable not to go in these as they'll only take you back either to the start or somewhere else you do not want to go. Bees will also try and kill you, and even when you have jumped on them they will just turn into hornets, so give them another bashing. Without going mad you'll see the big yarn, but approach with caution as you don't want to die.

On later levels in *Bubsy* you'll find loads of these small platforms. There's no point trying to avoid them as they lead to places that are necessary to get to. They are very slippy and small, and the wrong jump takes you back to ground level where you have to start all over again, so take the greatest of care.

ROCK AROUND THE CROC

Password: KMGRBS

At the top of this level are the water slides; they can get you some distance, but you have no control over where they are taking you. The bottom levels carry loads of yarn but are fraught with danger. It's best to collect the yarn along the bottom and when the danger is limited make your way upwards. You'll find platforms although only small ones will take you to places that give extra lives and other bonuses. Platforms with helicopter blades carry you to otherwise unreachable places, but these are often obstructed by turtles. You can bounce off the turtles back and reach the platforms but make sure you're quick. On the ground level the beavers are back gnawing trees. Avoid landing on the pointed tree stumps as they will kill you; it's safe to land on the flat stumps and they often have springs so you can reach other hard to get to places.

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CLAWS FOR ALARM

Password: SLJMBG

Added obstacles on this level are the spiked purple trees. These are a real pain. At the start go up and you'll see a platform, so jump onto this and it will take you to another platform guarded by a tree and a dog throwing eggs. To get over this, wait until the dog has stopped throwing and jump the tree. As soon as you've done this jump, land on the dog's head, proceed right and you'll find an extra life. The bottom water level has the raft which you can use to get from one part to another. There are breaks for sand between the water so there's a brief respite from the water but there are several dogs here. The beavers continually cause a problem as do their gnawed tree stumps. The main problem with this level is that the restart points are hard to find, so you have to make sure you don't die – which is easier said than done. Keep to the bottom water level and stay on the raft, which will take you to the zone's guardian. Firstly you have to step off a moving platform and then drop onto the raft. As you approach, get ready to jump. When the saucer comes down it will drop sweets which will slowly destroy your raft. You must be quick to jump on the saucer before your raft is destroyed.

NO TIME TO PAWS

Password: CCLDSL

Again similar to the last but with more added dangers, the spiders that you'll find on the platforms follow you so you must get them before they get you. From the off, jump right immediately and on the egg dog. Above you'll see a tunnel, so enter this and it will transport you to another tunnel. Go into this and you'll see another, again enter this and you'll end up at a restart point. The cobwebs that you see can be used to access other areas, but make sure you jump into the middle as this is the only place you can spring from. Up in the trees you'll see a small spaceship so bounce on the occupant, a dog, and then jump in the ship and fly it to the platform you want to reach. From this platform go straight to the right and you'll see the big yarn.

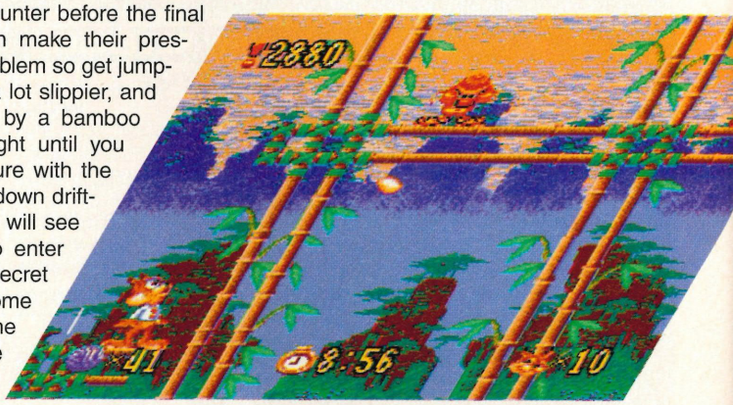
ACTION REPLAY DFO

FF023B0009	Infinite lives
FF024900XX	Replace XX with level number 0-13
FF00E90059	Unlimited time
FF00920003	Invincibility

LETHAL WOOLIE

Password: BTCLMB

The last level you'll have to encounter before the final confrontation. The spiders again make their presence felt, they cause an awful problem so get jumping. This time the platforms are a lot slippier, and the leaves have been replaced by a bamboo structure. Move along to the right until you come across the bamboo structure with the restart point. Jump off and glide down drifting slightly to the right. Here you will see one of the infamous tunnels, so enter this and you'll find yourself in a secret bonus level – the last you'll come across so make the most of the yarn. Coming out of this, move right and you'll find that there are vines acting as bridges.

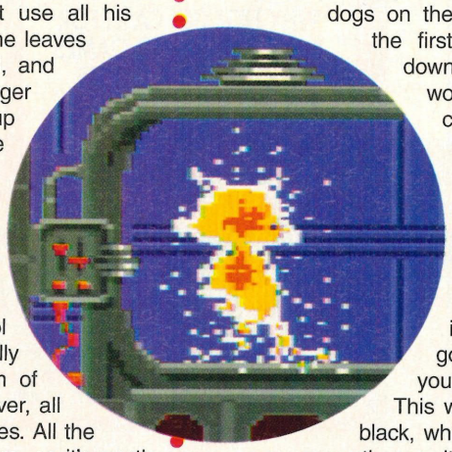


Walk along these and this will take you to the big yarnball. Unfortunately in your way are mutant monkeys, which are easily killed, egg dogs and dogs with guns.

EYE OF THE BOBCAT

Password: TGRTVN

Set in the jungle, Bubsy must use all his prowess to survive this zone. The leaves are your platforms on this level, and will assist you in reaching the larger platforms. From the off, climb up which will take you to a continue and an extra life. If you manage to slip off the pole, which is very probable, you'll see Bubsy waving goodbye, a sign that he's dead. From the top go right, and you can use the nests to access other areas. Dogs patrol the platforms and will continually throw eggs at you. The bottom of this level holds nothing whatsoever, all the action is in the top of the trees. All the vines and leaves lead somewhere, so it's worth checking every little bit, you never know what you might find. A useful tip high up in the trees is to glide. If you jump into the unknown, glide as you are more likely to survive. There are teleport tunnels which are very useful for taking you to restart points, which are imperative. Keep moving right and touching restarts and you'll find your way to the big yarn.



A FAREWELL TO WOOLIES

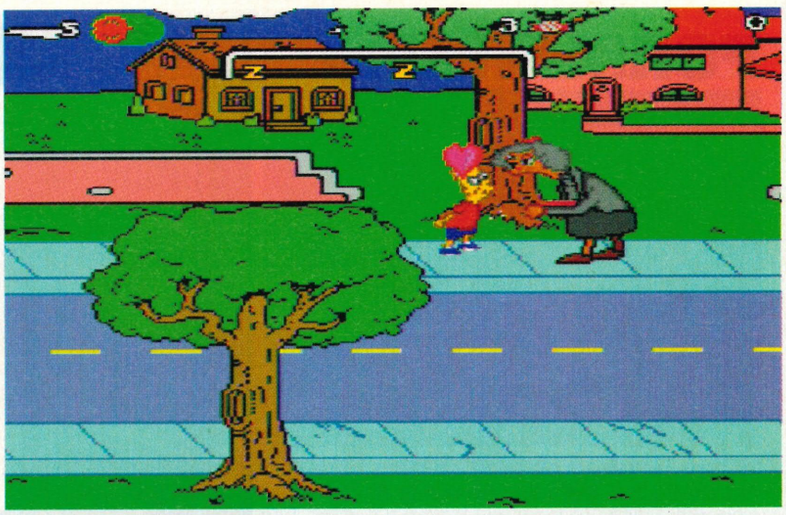
Password: STCJDH

The last level in the game and Bubsy finds himself in a spaceship. Go up the slope killing the dogs on the way. When you reach the first stage. you might fall down the hole, but don't worry just repeat the process. Keep moving up until you reach the top of the ship and go as far left as possible and you'll see a teleporter. Press UP in the teleporter and you'll be transported to the inside of the ship. Again go right to the top where you flick a switch across. This will turn the red liquid to black, which is essential as there are other switches to be activated. Leaving the ship, glide down to the bottom where you'll see another switch; flick this and run to the right. A box of springs will enable you to enter the ship. The switches you have activated will have opened a door which allows you access to the teleporter. The teleporter is located right at the top of the ship, at the left, enter this and you'll find yourself in another. This process needs to be repeated twice until you see loads of yarn. Make your way to the right and you'll encounter vicious dogs with cheese biscuits so get to the top of the ship. Where you see a clear passage ahead is where the final guardian is waiting. Run along the passage, collect your extra life and jump up the hole and go to the left. Where you see the controls and the steering wheel, stand next to it and the guardian will float down.

The guardian, if you give him chance, will spit baked beans and bananas at you. The effective way to kill him is when he appears, and is level with you, attack him. Using glide, stay close and quickly and repeatedly hit him, after about six hits he's history... and Bubsy lives to see another day.

BART'S NIGHTMARE

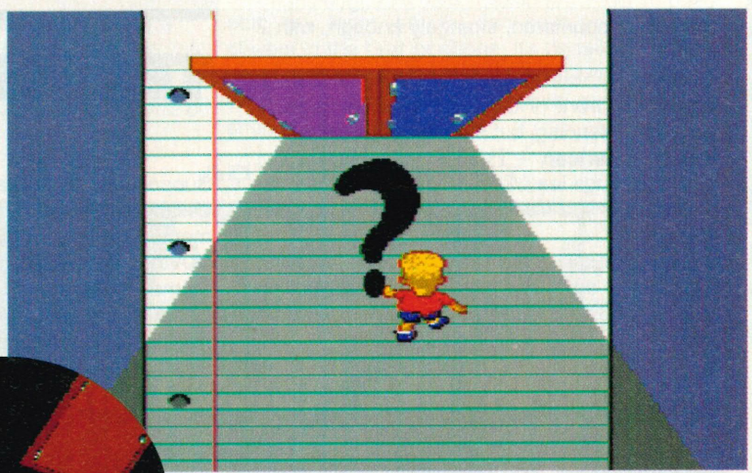
WINDY STREETS



Bart must collect his missing homework, the trouble is that it's flying around these perilous streets. The many dangers that await the yella fella come in all shapes and sizes. If Bart gets turned into a frog by Lisa, he must locate a granny; she will give him a big kiss and turn him back to normal. Touching Principal Skinner prevents Bart from getting damaged, but unfortunately also prevents Bart from collecting any more Zs; he'll also move slower with the suit on.

Bart will also be accosted by Nelson's bullies, and Lisa will come to your rescue and turn these fascists into sewer rats. On collecting a page, Bart will go through a series of doors: each door turns Bart into a super-hero and all must be completed to get that illusive A-grade.

THROUGH THE KEYHOLE...



Blue door – Bartman

There are plenty of extra lives to be had on this level, but it involves loads of ducking and diving. First the twins from Bart's school attack him in huge balloon. The best way to defeat them is to swoop down and fire constantly with your catapult.

Homer's drinking partner, Barney is out of his head after a particularly heavy session, he's located a pink peanut-spitting elephant which will fire at you. Barney's burps also cause a headache, so everything he chucks at you. Homer's employer, Monty Burns, will attack you in a hot air balloon carrying huge darts, so lure him into shooting a dart, then duck the dart and fire.

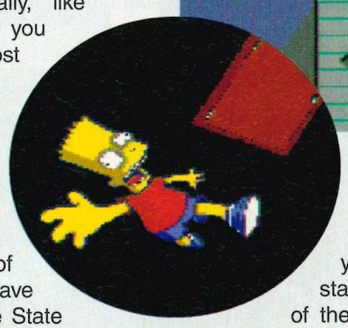
Smithers has acquired a bi-plane; as he flies in from the right, fly upwards shooting all the time, repeat the procedure flying down and shoot the underbelly.

Orange door – Indiana Bart

Bart must leap across coloured boxes, but always stay to the highest boxes and if you see any with flames, avoid them. If Bart grabs the eggs that drop onto the boxes he collects a continue, however, you must collect the egg before the bird does otherwise it will take you away. When you see the statues of Maggie's dummy in the background, start worrying. Maggie will start firing flames at you, so jump down to the blue boxes and jump between them as the dummy shoots passed. Each time a devil appears, whip it; they only take one hit and they're gone. If he gets away, he will spike you with his pitch fork.

Green door – Shakin' Stevens

Each button controls different levels of Bartzilla's fire, including a laser vision weapon. Some buildings explode automatically, like power stations, but you must destroy most things yourself.



Jet fighters try to bomb Bart next. Fire the beam at eye-level to send them crashing to Earth in spectacular fashion. At the end of the level, Bart will have to climb the Empire State building whilst avoiding various pieces of furniture. Pressing A will cause Bart to become electrified, essentially invulnerability. Halfway up, Mad Marge will attack as a mutant butterfly. The best method to avoid being knocked off is to stay still at the bottom of the screen; she will fly passed but she'll be back. Ape Man Homer is waiting at the top for you. As soon as he lunges, electrify yourself and when he hits you he'll get a nasty shock. Repeat this ten times.

Yellow door – Itchy and Scratchy

Bart is caught up in a violent cartoon, where the basic idea is to smash each other to pulp. Grab the hammer as soon as you see it and stand near the back of the screen to smash the troublesome duo as they run on screen. Further on they will acquire a flame-thrower and a bazooka; just jump on the table to avoid all this. There is a fire extinguisher on the table with the flying light bulbs, so stand at the front of the table and spray whoever appears first. To collect three extra lives, spray the first three bulbs. In the attic you'll locate a plunger gun, this wipes out just about everything. If it's all getting a bit too much stand on the chair and bash from there.

In the kitchen, Bart must tackle Itchy and Scratchy who have got hold of some butcher's knives. These take a whole life with each hit. Stand on the cupboards when a knife attack is imminent, then jump down and hit the next thing that moves. Coke cans, can be used to spray your enemies if you lose your weapon.

Pink door – Bart's bloodstream

The blood of Springfield's kid is infected with Mexican germs and the only way Bart can defeat the enemy germs is to inflate them with a bicycle pump until they explode. The easiest way to avoid the bombs is to stay at the top of the screen until they explode, then drift down carefully. The rad rider will yell "Hi There" whenever he's about to appear onscreen. When you see one touch it, this will turn the screen white and the force-field holding the page of homework will start to disintegrate. Try to avoid the hard-to-see bullets and keep touching the rad riders.

J LEAGUE PRO STRIKER

FORMATIONS

3 Top – An all-out attacking formation for desperate second-half charges. Plenty of scoring capability, but hopelessly open to counter-attacks.

2 Top – A very safe but effective formation, as used by Dom, the official office *J League* champion. Best countered, strangely enough, with 2 Top.

Sweeper – Your sweeper plays in the central position *in front of* the back four. Supposedly good for defending, but hard to get used to.

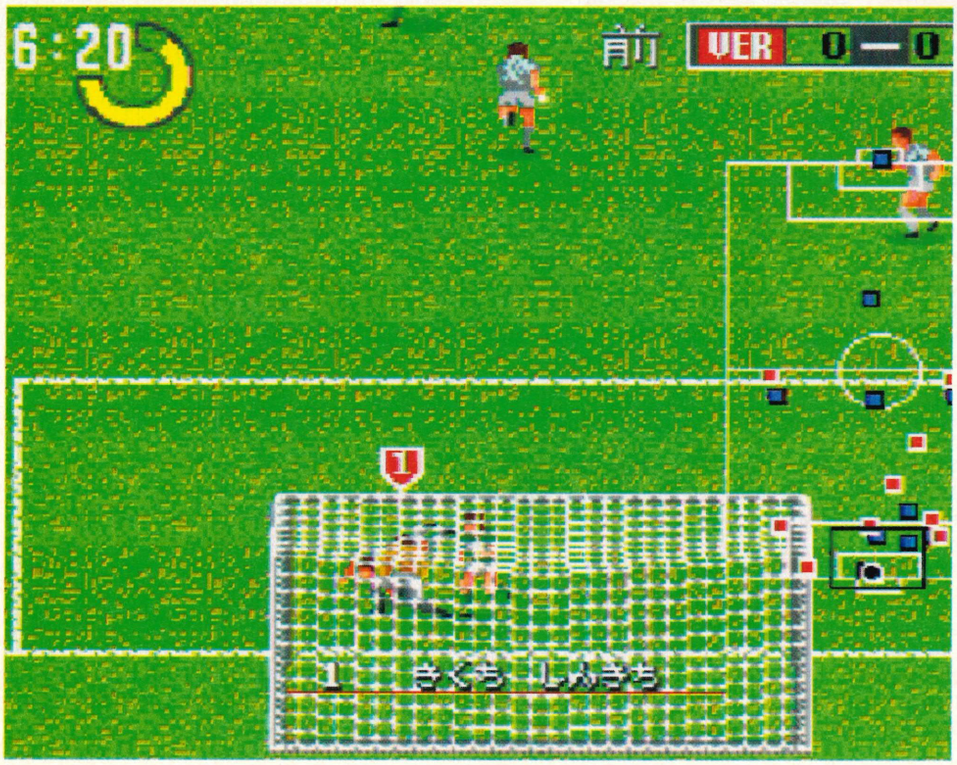
South American – Pushes your players out onto the wings leaving you open down the middle. Fine if you like banging the ball and not passing.

Bundesleaguer (German league) – Attacking formation, that has one main controlling defender. Can be open to quick breaks from midfield.

TEAMS

Supposedly, Sega Stars are the best team, but they're not in the normal team listing. Here's how you get them. From the title screen, choose the top option, then choose the second option on the next menu. Now you can choose to play with or against the All-stars.

Although you can fiddle with the stats of the Sega Stars, we have a sneaking suspicion that all the teams are around the same quality. While you certainly gain an affinity with particular teams, at the end of the day it comes down to whoever's the best player. One tip is to choose a team that corresponds to the their colour on the scanner. It's a real pain to have a team with red shirts on the pitch indicated by blue dots on the scanner.



BUTTON A

Initially the most-used button, this allows you to shoot at goal. Obviously, if you're in your own half, you will just kick the ball in the goal's direction. The longer you keep your finger on the button, the higher the ball goes, so don't get too heavy-fingered when inside the penalty box. By pushing LEFT or RIGHT when you press the button, the ball will be aimed at the left or right corner of the goal. If you keep the direction held down, the ball will also curl. Curling the ball is crucial to your success as you can really confuse the keeper on free kicks.

BUTTON B

The middle button allows you to direct the ball, instead of it automatically going to the opposition's goal. Use B when kicking the ball from the keeper of for throw-ins. By keeping the direction held down, you can also put some major curl on the ball, more than using button A. Button B is ideal for playing those long balls across the park.

BUTTON C

Initially ignored by novices, button c soon becomes a lethal weapon in the professional *J Leaguer*'s arsenal. By tapping c in conjunction with the direction, you can string together a series of piercing passes which will cut through any bandy-legged defence. If a player is around, the pass or throw automatically picks out the man nearest to the ball; if not, you'll just softly kick it into space.

NHLPA 93

BEST TEAMS

Pittsburgh – This team has a solid defence and attacking front men. Their star player is Mario Lemieux, his high rating ensures the opposition are always going to face a problem.

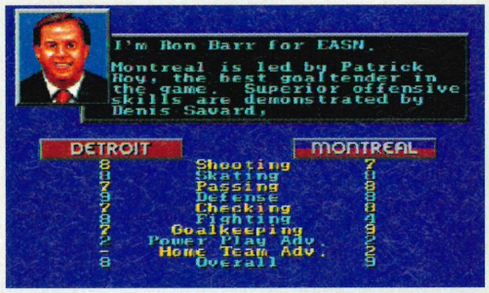
Chicago – All-round excellent side, very strong defensively and have the added bonus All Stars West goalie, Ed Belfour, in their side.

Washington – Again an excellent all-round team. Where they stand out above the rest is that they are very fast, and have a solid defence.

Montreal – Rated nine out of ten, so consequently are the joint best team in the whole game; very difficult to beat.

New York – The other team within the game that has a rating of nine out of ten, again hugely difficult to beat.

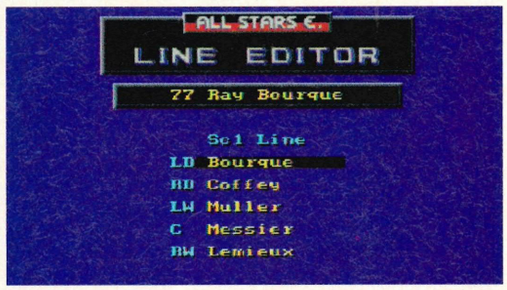
Detroit – The added bonus for this team is that they have the brilliant attacking line-up of major stars like Steve Yzerman and Sergei Fedorov, two of the best forwards within the game. They are slower than other teams but have a solid defence.



All Stars East – These excellent all-rounders have a brilliant record of away wins; all the players are very highly rated.

All Stars West – Similar to All Stars East in that all the players in the team are of high quality. The additional bonus for this team is that they have the best player in the whole game, Jeremy Roenick.

LINE UPS



The line-up is a massively important aspect of the game. Moulding your team to the right specifications is the difference between winning and losing. Within the statistics for the line-ups you'll see the overall rating of the players, their strength, speed and agility. Obviously you want to choose the players who have the highest overall rating, but not all the teams have players whose rating goes into the 90s, so before you play, check your team. You can edit your team, so you can have your strongest players in the best positions. It's beneficial to get to know a specific team; this way you'll get to find out who plays best in which position and their main strengths and weaknesses.

GENERAL TIPS

• In play, when approaching the goalie if you shoot from a reasonable distance, more than likely the puck will rebound. Follow up your shot and score off the rebound, this is a reliable way to get a goal.

• When you're one-on-one with the goalkeeper, pressing button B will hopefully nutmeg the keeper and provide you with an easy scoring opportunity.

• In a similar situation, drift to the right or left, and the goalkeeper will follow you in order to block your shot, so flick the puck into the opposite corner of the net.

• Juggling the player in front of the keeper is another way to confuse the keeper and more often than not results in a goal. Using button C quickly will lift the puck off the ice. If you see the keeper off his line, it's possible to chip him. Along similar lines, it's always worth trying shots from a distance, as they often sneak in.

• Passing the puck around results in splitting the defence, so practise your passing, it really does make the difference.

• Practise, practise, practise...

Thanks to Jason Wright from Lincoln.

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Top movie companies like Columbia Pictures (under the guise of Sony Imagesoft) are hurriedly rushing around trying to set up software arms to their films divisions. But film licences have been around since the year dot. David Graham unravels the silver screen phenomenon...

Stunning movie licences are a bit like Take That singles and Dominik Diamond's jackets (may he rest in peace) – good ones don't come along that often, and when they do, it's odds on that the only resemblance they bear to the actual film is in the title. You see, what it all comes down to is 'big money', as Les Dennis would say. Software companies around the world are trying to do two things. The first is give you a game you'll play and enjoy, so that you'll remember their name and buy their stuff next time round. Their second objective is to make more money than you could possibly imagine; which isn't too tough in a billion dollar marketplace. Make no mistake, this is big business, and no-one wants to be remembered as the Eldorado (or T*HQ if you're a Nintendo user) of the software world.

Buying up the licence to make a game based on a successful movie is what the men in suits call sound business practice; speculate to accumulate, lunch is for wimps and all that. After all, if you were happy to shell out up to £8 down at your local cinema to watch Jurassic Park or Dracula, then you'll happily pay at least £39.99 to play the game of the film in the comfort of your own home. Or so the theory goes.

But, as often seems to happen in the business world, the men in suits get it all horribly wrong, and us gamers are left to play – and I use the term 'play' loosely – hideous piles of old cack like *Batman Returns, Predator 2* or even *Back To The Future III*. Ooh, aren't we the lucky ones. Laugh all you like, but so contentious and continuous a problem is this lack of playability in licences that Ocean have allegedly had to completely redesign their SNES version of Jurassic Park on Nintendo's orders. One, two, three... shame. However, it does at least mean that SNES owners stand a better than average chance of getting a playable game in the long run.

Then there are the movie licences which bear so little relation to the film of the same name as to be more like sequels themselves! Since the whole idea of a good licence is for the player to take over the role of the character in the situations experienced during the film, you'd expect the software bods to pay a little more attention to detail here. But no. As much as I loved *Alien 3*, it must be said that it bears very little resemblance to the movie. What *Alien 3* did have, however, was great gameplay and some stunning graphics, which more than made up for some serious artistic licence.

Not even hallowed old pants-on-the-outside type heroes are immune to Software Deficiency Syndrome (SDS). One of the wiffiest releases of 1992 was *Batman Returns*, the game of the mega-grossing film. It was disappointing not only because we had all been expecting something a bit special, but because Konami were working on the same game for the SNES, and it turned out to be far superior to the Sega version in every respect. But why? Surely a game produced by Sega themselves should be far better than anything a less-funded third party developer could come up with?

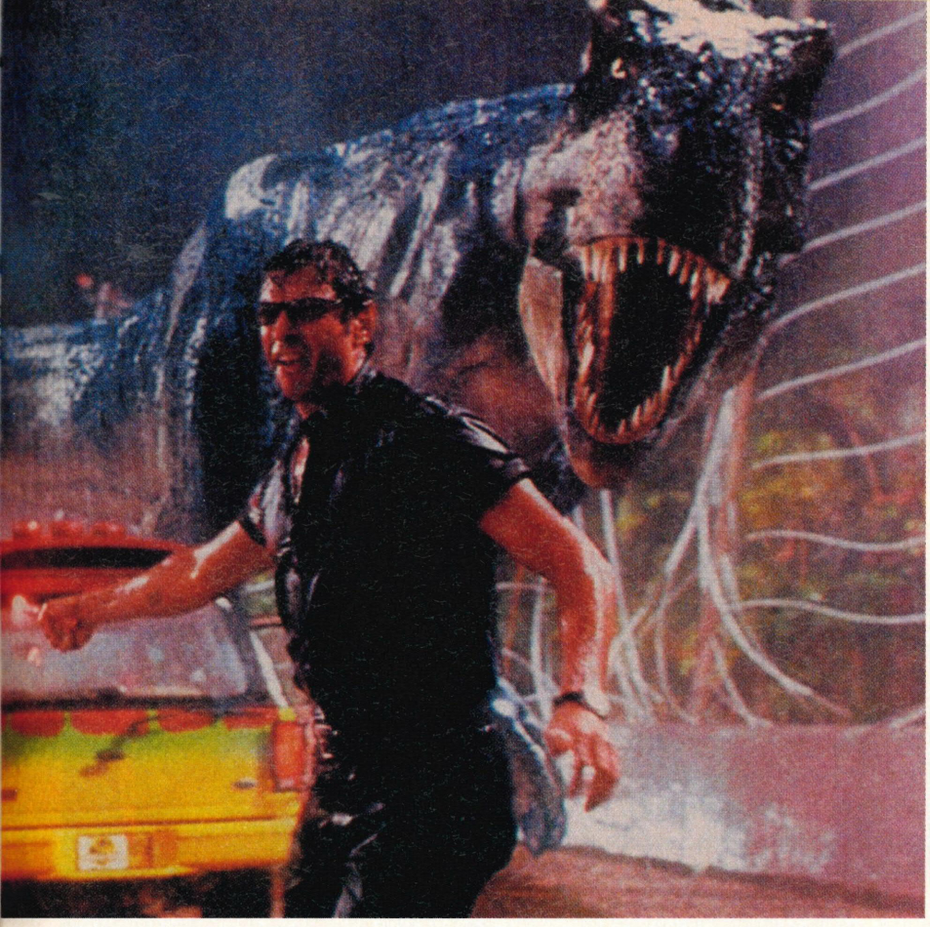
The main problem with licences is obvious: bandwagoning. A software company scoops up a licence in the hopes that it will shift more units than the next *Sonic* or *Street Fighter II* incarnation. What happens next is down to a combination of things. Take *Terminator* as an example. Great graphics, shame about the size. When Probe programmed the game, there were certain rules they had to stick to. A clause in the contract meant that you weren't allowed to play as The Terminator, or rather, Arnie himself, which left you as Kyle Reese. Well, fair enough, he was the good guy, after all. Then, because of some rather strange rules, you couldn't shoot the cops dead. Weird. The main complaint players and reviewers had was the limited number of levels, and the easiness of the game. Probe learned some lessons from that, but too late to do anything about *Terminator* itself.

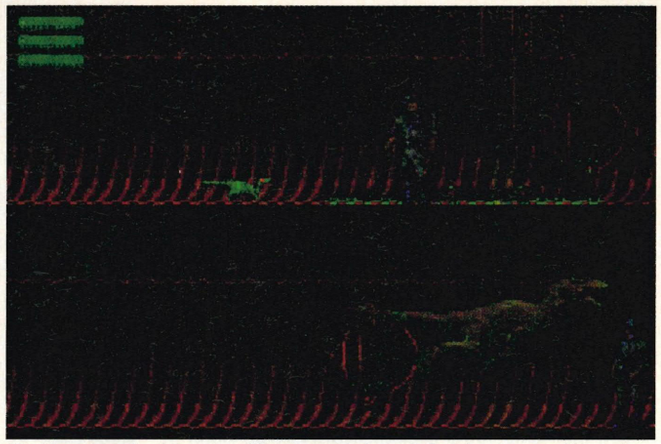
This leads to further problems. For instance, if you buy yourself a licence and then find that because of various contractual obligations, you can't accurately represent the film within the game,

"I'm slightly wary that sometimes licensed software titles are probably not as good as they could have been, had they [the developers] been freed from the constraints of that time limit."

Dave Wilson, Electronic Arts

what do you do? Well, the correct thing to do would be to put the game out for sale, and call it an *adaptation* of the film, or give it a name similar to the movie. I know it sounds ridiculous, and it's all about semantics, but for the sake of argument, let's say you buy up the licence for Beverly Hills Chainsaw Cop Part 5 and then find out that due to your licence, you can't program it with the chainsaw cop as the main sprite, or that the original film would be





The biggest movie of the year without a doubt, Jurassic Park has been packing out cinemas for months now. The subsequent dino-fever that has swept the country has inevitably led to Jurassic Park games being hurriedly programmed and released.

"On *Jurassic Park*, they have done something different in that all the formats are specifically different games... We've written the game for a number of different of systems, and not written it for the highest platform and then ported it down."

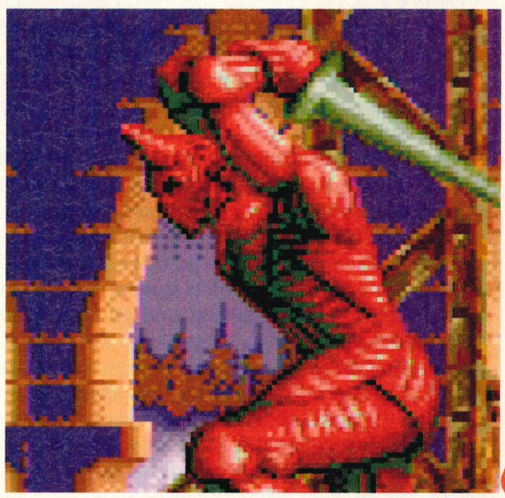
Andrew Wright, Sega UK

too limited for a console game. And while *The Terminator* did manage to represent the film fairly accurately, a number of so-called licences haven't.

What do you do? Do you put it out anyway, or do you change the name and call it Attack Of The Beverly Hills Chainsaw Cop, and make it obvious that it's not a console version of the film? If you have any scruples, you opt for the latter choice. Indeed, one such *adaptation* on the Aliens theme will be released on Sega 8-bit later this year. If, as a software house, you fail to do that, then you're not only being dishonest about the product you're selling, but you also theoretically risk a test case under the Trades Descriptions Act, too.

While it's unfortunate that until very recently, a lot of software houses were happy to put out dodgy products, safe in the knowledge that they would sell simply because of consumer demand for new games, that's not strictly the case anymore. With Codemasters leading the charge into the courts, the big two (Sega and Nintendo) have discovered that they have to open up the market to new firms which, in turn, means increased choice for us users and increased competition amongst publishers. Software developers have had to improve upon games which would otherwise have made it into the shops, except in the case of big licences, which have remained remarkably poor.

One of the worst examples of this has to be *Batman Returns* on the Mega-CD. Okay, so the game has been rated fairly highly by most of the games magazines, but that 80-90% is very misleading unless you thoroughly read the reviews. What most magazines have been rating highly is the driving portion of the game, not the platform section, which remains largely unchanged from the



Not even little Winona Ryder's heaving bosom could prevent the over-hyped Dracula from being an embarrassing flop. She could do even less to influence the lack of success that the inept game received as it was shoved out onto the street to damning reviews all round.

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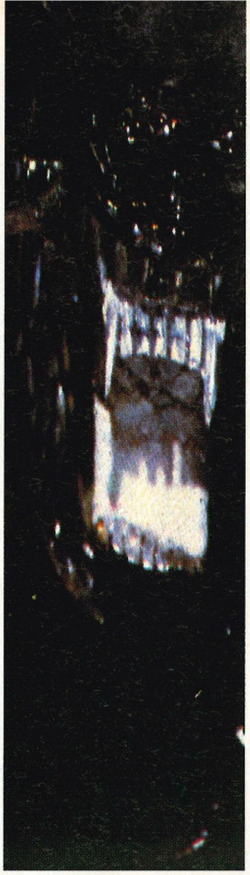
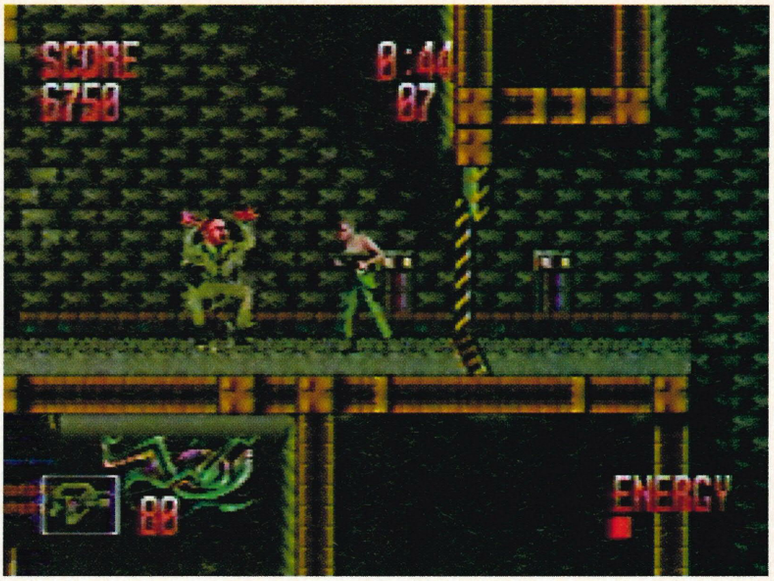




"What *Alien 3* did have, however, was great gameplay and some stunning graphics, which more than made up for some serious artistic licence."

dire Mega Drive cartridge version. Here we have a blatant example of Sega, the people who should know better, cobbling together a game to make the most out of a licence. Had they released the driving section as a stand-alone game with a two-player feature and called it something like, *Batmobile – Revenge Of The Penguin*, it would still have sold well and received reasonable marks from 90% of the reviewers.

But just what goes wrong? Why did we have to suffer the travesty that was *Back To The Future III* on the Mega Drive, why was *Predator 2* even released? One of the main problems would seem to be the time companies spend on licensed games. Bearing in mind that a good Mega Drive games takes at least a year to put together, licences have far tighter deadlines. The quicker publishers can code them and get them on the shelves, the better the chance that they'll enjoy the publicity and consumer awareness generated by the movie. *Dracula* on the Mega-CD is another fine example of a licence suffering from SDS. Reviewed by most of the magazines a couple of months ago, it still hasn't appeared in the shops. The reason for the delay is the fact that Sony and Psygnosis have pulled the game and are spending an additional three months reprogramming it, probably concentrating on the game's weak areas: combat, controls, etc. So poor was the reception it received in the Press that it became glaringly obvious that Sony needed to do more work on it.

One company with an excellent track record and no major movie licences to its name is Electronic Arts. The kings of the sports sim have yet to make an appearance on the licence scene – if you discount Buck Rogers – and their PR man, Dave Wilson explains why.

"I think they [licences] are a challenge. I don't think they're a soft option from any angle, really."
Alan Welsman, Sony Electronic Publishing

"There's a logistical reason, obviously, in terms of the financial burden of going after movie licences. There's also all the different implications of beating deadlines in order to maximise the exploitation of that licence (in other words, releasing it when it counts). That sort of runs slightly counter to EA's philosophy. Essentially, EA has what I would consider a fairly healthy policy; we have rigid software milestones and a game has to achieve certain levels before it's adjudged to be at Alpha stage, Beta stage and final stage. We also have rigid quality control, games-testing and bug-testing. So basically, if a game doesn't meet the high standards we set ourselves, then we would much rather hang onto the title until it does meet those requirements, rather than ship something shoddy to meet a deadline.

"The other thing is, we've got a certain commitment to produce original titles, rather than the sort of traditional fare based on film licences. We have handled other licensed product, but not EA product. The most recent title we shipped was *Toys*, which we handled on the SNES for Absolute Entertainment Inc, which is an American company and one of our affiliates in Europe."

So the potential financial cost and the probability of having to do a rushed job is obviously enough to put EA off for the time being. That would seem to make sense: after all, if you want to make money, you have to put the game out as near to the movie release as possible so that you can ride on the movie's coat tails. But how does Wilson view some of the licensed games we've seen on the Mega Drive?

"I'm slightly wary that sometimes licensed software titles are probably not as good as they could have been, had they [the developers] been freed from the constraints of that time limit.

"I think that by and large, my personal opinion is that most film licences are fairly disappointing. That's borne out, I think, by the majority of poor review marks that a lot of these titles get in the specialist press."

No-one's going to argue with that, certainly not the majority of journalists who have reviewed bad licences and have first-hand experience of them. But just what is it that turns a potentially great licence into a dreadful cartridge? Over to Dave Wilson again...

"Well, there does seem to be a preponderance of games that follow an excepted formula; that immediately opt for the platform genre, for example... Most of the interpretations aren't very original. It's much more of a challenge for a publisher to produce an original title that sells, and it's a much harder task to sell something that no-one's ever heard of as a concept, without any of the hype or awareness that exists for a movie licence. There's a sort of, not a hidden agenda, but there is that element, I suppose, in the background where you're producing a movie licence that says this product obviously has a significant point in its favour before you come up with a design; you know it should sell on the hype machine for the movie. I don't know that's a conscious excuse used for producing sub-standard product, but it's possibly a factor.

"I don't think that being a movie licence necessary means it has to be a bad product. I think it's rather telling that a lot of them *are* fairly sub-standard, but that having been said, I think potentially that a good development team, a good publisher, could produce a good original treatment of a film licence. I just think it's a bit sad that not very many have actually realised that kind of potential."

But things may well change as several of Hollywood's larger studios begin to shoot specific footage for video games, with Sylvester Stallone's Demolition Man being an example. Not surprisingly, the Hollywood money men have realised the possible returns from licensed products, and are acting accordingly in an attempt to increase their share of a lucrative pie.

Jurassic Park is another case in point, with the game's developers being given access to everything from the software the film's special effects were developed on, to experts who advised the producers on dinosaurs. Whether all this co-operation between studios and developers will lead to better quality games remains to be seen, since all a Silicon Graphics workstation allows you to do is produce slicker graphics. The gameplay still relies on keen programming and very thorough playtesting.

While it's still true that the Press like nothing more than to praise something for months and then shoot it down again, the games market is one exception. Editors, reviewers and the public are all subject to the same hype machine that raises expectations at preview stage, when hacks are only given a brief look at the game. It's only when finished versions or ROM boards are sent out to the magazines for review that gameplay problems become glaringly obvious. And no amount of fancy visuals will make up for an unplayable game.

As Jurassic Park gets ready to hit shelves, initial reviews of Sega's blockbuster haven't been too favourable. Can we look forward to another case of Cashasaurous Rex? Or will the finished product really be a giant leap forward for movie licence games? Well, according to Andy Wright, Sega Europe's marketing supremo, it actually doesn't

look half bad. For a licence, that is:

"I've been quite impressed with the game that I've played on the Mega Drive; it was surprisingly good. I thought, 'Oh no, not another film licence,' but it is surprisingly good. The other two formats (MS and M-CD), I haven't played properly yet, but the CD looks quite promising."

Ah, yes, we wanted to know, but would it be a departure from the tried and tested licence game formula?

"On *Jurassic Park*, they have done something different in that all the formats are specifically different games, designed for that format. So the Mega-CD is a first person perspective game, from what I've seen, it's quite similar to *7th Guest* (the stunning PC adventure) in a way. The Mega Drive is a game similar to *Flashback*, with very pretty graphics, and the Master System is an entirely different game, involving first-person shooting action. We've written the game for a number of different of systems, and not written it for the highest platform and then ported it down, as it were."

Having already spoken to Dave Wilson, we wondered if Sega agreed with his reasoning behind the poor quality of licensed games?

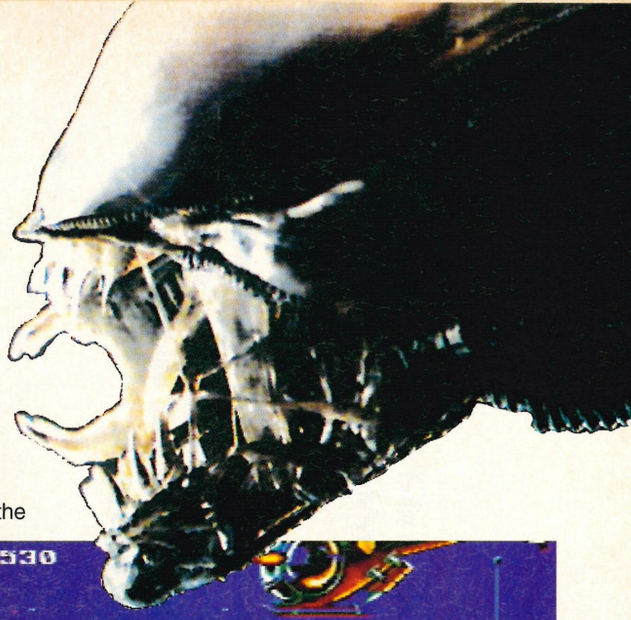
"It's mostly down to tight development deadlines and also the game format you can apply to a particular licence. Unfortunately, most game scenarios are ideally suited to a platform type of game, and I think that approach has become a little cynical, and you're getting licensed game after licensed game after licensed game all looking very similar. That sort of became increasingly obvious with the range of Ocean games, where they just sort of kept tagging onto the *RoboCop* licence. You know, Ocean had a very good platform engine, you just wished they wouldn't use it again and again."

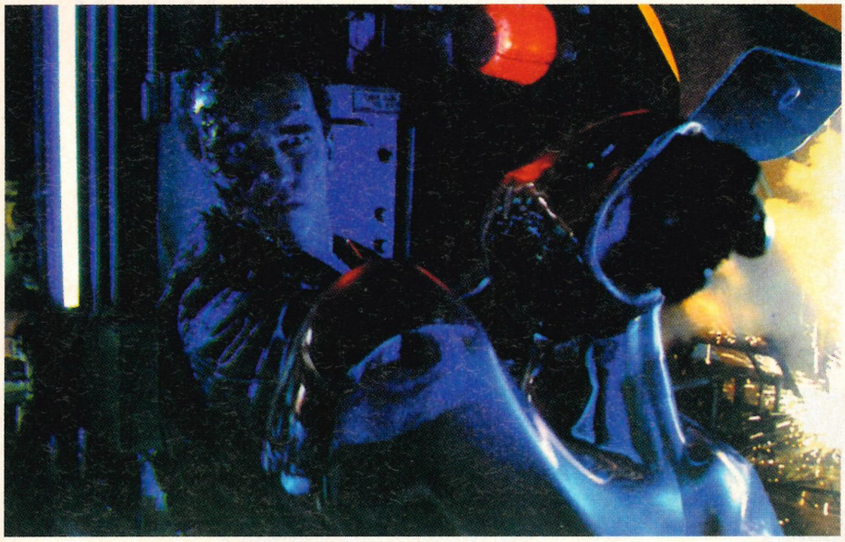
So given that movie moguls are now shooting licence-specific footage for movies, and that Steven Seagal has had his image digitised for future games, can we expect an upturn in the standard licence game?

"I don't know. Licences are always a very dangerous thing to take on. You're never guaranteed that the film will be a hit. For example, there was a whole load of licence activity around Dick Tracy, and that was one of the biggest flops in Hollywood, and a lot of people that were involved in the licence activity got stung quite badly. So you're not guaranteed that the film is going to be hit. Even films with bankable stars in them, like The Last Action Hero with Arnie in it – and with Arnie you're almost guaranteed a hit – haven't done very well. So it becomes more and more risky to get involved with licences."

Does that mean that Sega would prefer to avoid licences?

"There's no doubt that licences help to focus the





The Terminator was a character almost crying out to be put into a video game. As a result of the character's charisma and mainly the movie's success there have been a number of Terminator and Terminator 2 titles released across all the formats. Sad to say, none have really captured the atmosphere and originality that made the films so successful.

"A lot of software houses were happy to put out dodgy products, safe in the knowledge that they would sell simply because of consumer demand for new games, that's not strictly the case anymore."

product in the consumer's mind, i.e., 'Mummy, mummy, look, there's *RoboCop*,' rather than, 'Mummy, there's *Gunstar Heroes*'. It just helps the product shout out from the shelves. I mean, ideally, what we'd like to do would be put out product that we didn't have to get licences for. I mean, some of our most successful product has been unlicensed, such as *Sonic*. Now *Sonic* himself has turned into a licensed character! But at the end of the day, the public get what the public want, and the public want games based around films..."

So there you are. It's all your fault!

With Jurassic Park out of the way, the next biggies from the film industry are Cliffhanger and The Last Action Hero – although why we never saw a Reservoir Dogs game is beyond me – both coming from the newly-formed games wing of Sony, called appropriately enough, Sony Electronic Publishing. Did Alan Welsman, their head PR honcho, agree that developers took the easy way out too often and opted for platform licences?

"I don't think it is the rule, but certainly, *Last Action Hero* and *Cliffhanger* are both platform games. But then again, there are a lot of good platform games out there..."

Given the poor reviews *Jurassic Park* has had, were Sony confident that *Cliffhanger* and *Last Action Hero* would fare better?

"Yeah, I think they should do well. So far I've taken them out to three or four magazines and the reaction's been good; I mean, it's not brilliant, but it's good. And I think that people accept sometimes that it is a licence and therefore it's not an original idea, but the reaction has so far been very good."

So from Sony's point of view, are movie licences a challenge to produce, or a soft option?

"I think they're a challenge. I don't think they're a soft option from any angle, really; from the actual negotiation of the licence right through to the production of the game... It's got to be a challenge, because they [the developers] are up against time, and they're obviously trying to do the best job they can, so it's a real challenge for everyone."

All these comments point to a fairly scary phenomenon; most of the publishers believe licensed games to be inherently bad, simply because most films don't allow you much flexibility when it comes to games design, and the deadlines are against you from the start. A platform game is the most obvious choice; it's easy to produce, low risk, can incorporate most of the film's scenario and 90% of developers have platform engines already set up. This could lead the cynical amongst you to conclude either that poor quality licensed games are put out by publishers who know how bad they are, but are happy to sit back and let the cash pile up, or that publishers know that licensed games aren't as good as original titles, but that because of the deadlines, there's nothing they can do about it. Which basically means that you'll never, ever see a 'game of the film' which lives up to its promise. Bit sad, really, isn't it?

Perhaps I'm just being a cynic, and maybe there *are* loads of really good Mega Drive licences that I've overlooked... I'll leave you to choose your own conclusions on that one. In the meantime, I'm off

A-Z of tips

Tips, tips and yet more tips are what we've got here. In the A-Z of Tips we aim to give you the most useful tips we can find for every game on Mega Drive and Mega-CD.

But it doesn't stop there because if you can find a special cheat or hidden option for a game that's not listed, we want to hear from you. (All corrections to errors are also appreciated!) There are £5 software vouchers for every new cheat that we print, which means you get the money and we get the best guide around.

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AFTERBURNER 2
Level select
Hold A, B, C and press START on the title screen to enter a level select. Use the joypad to select a level, then press START to play.

AIR DIVER
Invulnerability
Go to the map screen and place the cursor over an area where there are no enemies. Hold START and press A, B, C, A, A, B, C, B, A and B. Now hold START until the game commences.

AISLE LORD
Avoid combats
Go to the config screen and choose no sound effects. Now press A, B, C, C, B, A, B, A, C, A, C, B, A. The screen flashes to confirm the cheat.

ALESTE
Level select
From the title screen, reset the Mega Drive ten times. Now enter the options screen while holding LEFT-DOWN. You should get an extra select option.

ALEX KIDD IN ENCHANTED CASTLE
Avoid sub-game
To continue the game without having to play scissors-paper-stone, go to any boss and as soon as the chit-chat is out of the way, press START to get the select screen, then START again to proceed.

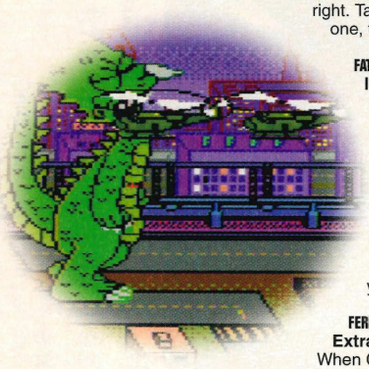
CENTURION
Password
Want the world? Type in this code.
`QDUA YQ25 5555`
`55NK VKXW IPJI`

CHAKAN
Level jump
In the practice mode, jump on the platform above the air portal then go right onto the small platform. Press START and choose Alchemy. Return Chakan to the Navigation level and the first 12 levels will be completed

COOL SPOT
Level select, time, health
Pause the game and press A, B, C, B, A, C, A, B, C, B, A, C then unpause.**CURSE**
Level select
Press RESET, then button A and START. You'll then enter the config screen and be able to choose your start level.

CYBERBALL
Password
Enter `CGBB B8FB BB2V` to win the game with the Chicago Killers.

DANGEROUS SEED



FANTASIA
Extra items
Start stage one, go down the stairs and shoot at the two enemies. Two brooms will appear from the right. Take these to the left and shoot the first one, then loads of items will appear.

FATAL FURY
Infinite continues
On the continue screen, hold UP and press A, B and C together. Let go and press them again and the credits will pop up each time you do it.

FASTEST ONE
Invincible tyres
Choose World Championship Mode and enter `HAPPY NEW YEAR` as your name.

FERIOS
Extra credits
When Chapter 1: Devil in Diros comes on screen, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A.

FIGHTING MASTERS
Same players
When selecting the first player, put your cursor over your character and press UP and A simultaneously. Player two will now also appear as this monster.

GYNOUG
Level select
Put your cursor on the Control Menu option and hold A, B, C for about ten seconds.

HARD DRIVIN'
Easier challenge
You don't have to race the Phantom Photon on the stunt track, just smash through the barrier to go around the speed track instead.

HELLFIRE
Extra continues
Choose hard from the options screen then go to the sound select and listen to any tune for 70 seconds. The game should start and replace the difficulty setting with "YEAH RIGHT". Cheat mode is now active and you have 99 continues.

HERZOG ZWEI
Password
Use `JLJOIGLAOKN` to get to the last level.

HUMANS
Passwords
Level 60 – `YNTBXYJYNWLK`
Level 70 – `VMPKNRSXXYTR`
Level 80 – `XPMNWJKFNQZC`

THE IMMORTAL
Invincibility

ALIEN³
Level select
Plug two controllers into the Mega Drive and go to the options screen. Press C, UP, RIGHT, DOWN, LEFT, A, RIGHT and DOWN on the second joypad and you will hear a power-up noise. Start the game, then pause it. On pad one press C, A and B to skip the level.

ALIEN STORM
Unlimited continues
Choose Scooter. When your life gets to zero, self-destruct and you can carry on without dying.

ALISIA DRAGOON
Level select
Hold A after the Sega logo has disappeared and then press B till Gainax is whisked away. Now hold C and press START when the stars come out. A chime will confirm the cheat. During the game, press C to skip the level and B with UP to increase your hit points.

ALTERED BEAST
Infinite continues
Press START and A on the title screen to continue from the last game played.

ARCH RIVALS
Easy scoring
Vinny's the best character. So start with the ball and pass to your team-mate, run straight up the court and press the pass-back button. Run into the corner and shoot and you'll nearly always get a three-pointer.

ARCUS ODYSSEY
Level jump
Enter EEEEEEEEEE as the password to start on level five with six reverse dolls.

ARNOLD PALMER GOLF
Super shot
Enter your name as EVE and you will be able to hit the ball great distances.

AYRTON SENNA'S SMGP 2
End password
Use SENNA or CHAMPION as your password to see the end of the game.

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3
Stage select
Pause the game, hold A and press UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT to go forward a level.

BAD OMEN
99 balls
During the title menu press buttons A and C together, then START. The screen switches and you will notice that your ball stock has increased to 99.

BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER
Passwords
Stage 6 guardian: 6300
Stage 7 guardian: 7200

BATTLEMANIA
Strange scene
When the Sega logo appears, frantically press START on the second joypad and something weird will happen.

BIO HAZARD BATTLE
Level select
When the Sega logo appears, hold C and press UP, UP-RIGHT, DOWN-RIGHT, DOWN-LEFT, LEFT, UP-LEFT and UP. Then press START for a level select.

BURNING FORCE
Extra lives
When the title screen disappears, press B, A, B, A, A, C, A, A and START to get ten more lives.

Extra credits
Start the game and press LEFT, LEFT, LEFT, DOWN, RIGHT, LEFT and RIGHT on the title screen for 99 credits.

DARIUS 2
Zone select
Press C, A, C, B, C, A, B, A, B, C, A on the title screen.

DESERT STRIKE
Extra lives
To add ten lives to your Apache, enter the password BQQQAEZ and any level password.

DRAGON'S FURY
33 balls
Try entering 0956335555 as the password for 33 balls.

DEVILISH
99 balls
On the title screen, hold A, C and LEFT , then press START.

DINOLAND
Test card
When the Wolf Team logo's onscreen, press A, B, C and then START.

DJ BOY
Action replay
Watch the demo when you've completed a game – it's your game over again!

EA HOCKEY
Best shots
Slap shot from the blue line, using LEFT and RIGHT to direct the puck. Close shots are best performed slowly with lots of dribbling directly at the keeper and then pressing C.

ECCO THE DOLPHIN
Level select
Enter PLEASE on the title screen followed by any of these letters: EE, FF, GG, HH, II, KK, OO, QQ, UU, WW or ZZ.

EL VIENTO
Level select
Press START during the game, then UP, LEFT, RIGHT, DOWN and B to jump to the next stage.

ESWAT
Level select
When you complete the game properly, you can go to any level by pressing RIGHT-DOWN and A, B, and C simultaneously on the title screen. Just press START to get the select.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S BOXING
Green goddess
Start a new career and enter your name as The Beast. You'll turn green and have superhuman abilities.

EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER
Password
Enter A6UAA61AA to get in the final.

F-1 CIRCUS
View ending
Choose world championship. Enter your name then press UP-LEFT, B and START.

FAERYTALE ADVENTURE
View ending
Enter your password as:
7R2KUL6RSZXSK6NHGS
DCB720663RI2HO785P

FIRE MUSTANG
Extra life
Just hold LEFT and C then press START on the title screen.

FIRE SHARK
Level select
Go to the level info screen and press A, C, UP and START to enter the round number.

FLASHBACK
Level codes
Level 7 (easy) – INCBIN
Level 7 (normal) – CLIP
Level 7 (hard) – KALIMA
Last code – CYGNUS

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
Infinite continues
Start in two-player mode, then when player one kicks the bucket, just press player two's START button rapidly to get him in the game.

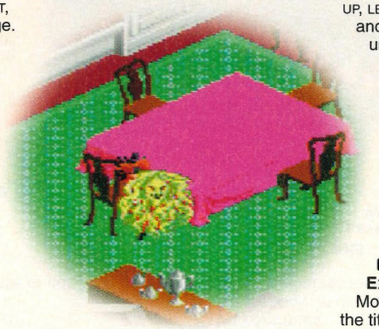
GAIN GROUND
Level select
On the options screen press A, C, B, C.

GAIARES
Invincibility
Start playing then pause the game. Hold LEFT, A and C for a second then continue the game and you should be trouble-free.

GALAHAD
Infinite lives
Type in LTUS as your password then press A, B, C and START to skip levels.

GHOSTBUSTERS
Freaky stairs
You're totally immune to the ghosts while on the stairs.

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
Invincibility
Go to the options screen four times. When you get back to the title screen press A, A, A, A, UP, UP, LEFT, RIGHT, LEFT and RIGHT. Then hold B and press START to enter the fray unharmed.



GLOBAL GLADIATORS
Level skip
Pause the game and press B, C, B, A, B, B, C, B, A, B. Unpause.

GOLDEN AXE
Level select
Hold DOWN-RIGHT, B and START simultaneously on the title screen.

GOLDEN AXE II
Extra credits
Move the cursor to the Options choice on the title screen and press A, B and C simultaneously. Keep them held down until you enter the options screen, then let go of A. Move to the Exit option and press START. Choose one or two players then a normal game by pressing A. Credits should now be eight.

GRANADA
Dopey git
Once you've completed the game, wait till the music's finished and press A. Now your character will fall over – straaaange.

GRANDSLAM TENNIS
Hidden options
Enter CONFIG followed by full stops as your password.

Wait for the level name to appear then hold START. Now hold A until the game appears and finally release A to initiate invincibility.

INDIANA JONES & THE LAST CRUSADE
Level select
On the Lucasfilm logo, press A, B, C, B, C, A, C, A, B. The level option should show SHHHHHHH.

INSPECTOR X
Infinite credits
When the continue option comes up after dying, hold DOWN-RIGHT and hammer away at the C button until the credits start to climb.

JAMES POND
Open all exits
Press C, LEFT and START on the title screen. When playing, press A, B and C while rotating the joypad to open the doors on the level.

JAMES POND II: ROBOCOD
Level select
On the title screen press A, C, DOWN, LEFT and START, then before you know it, a level select will be yours.

JAMES "BUSTER" DOUGLAS
Extra continues
Wait for the Game Over message to appear then press UP and START together. You can only do this once, so only use it when you've got a chance.

JOHN MADDEN '92
Passwords
0465100 – quarter-finals
0075121 – semi-finals
0475352 – superbowl

KID CHAMELEON
Final guardian
Go to the Lake Woods 2 level. Fight your way to the end and jump onto the last prize block above the exit. Now press DOWN-RIGHT and then press the jump and special attack buttons to warp to Plethora.

KING'S BOUNTY
Password
VRP 06 8TQ
FT3 VE M6N
DG1 ZZ 7B1
MOE 8W CQR
WOA BD EHX
DCE FH Y22
VW1 JL MF6

KLAX
Special gems
On the title screen, hold LEFT-UP, A, B, C and START for a special game.

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE
Open all doors
Enter SMAILLIW as the password.

LAKERS VS CELTICS
Password
3L2GJS – LA Lakers vs Philadelphia 76ers

LEMMINGS
Sunsoft passwords
Level 25 – BWFRB
Level 30 – CBMFL

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER
Passwords
Plain Aria – CQIERDG
Domino Mirror – CSIEIYE
Freedom Train – CSIEAZE

A-Z of tips

MEGA DRIVE.MEGA DRIVE.MEGA DRIVE.

PHANTASY STAR 2
Enhanced life
Keep pressing B and C while you're walking along to open and close the menu. A flaw in game means monsters will rarely attack you now.

PHELIOS
Extra continues
On the Chapter One screen, press C, A, B, A, C, A, B, A for six continues.

PGA TOUR GOLF II
Confuse computer
Select a Skins game versus the computer. When he's on the green, press START, then choose Green from the menu and press A. Now move the cursor in any direction, press START and the computer will take the shot you've set up.

PIT-FIGHTER
Extra continues
Get to level eight with one-player then pause the game and plug in the second controller. Unpause the game and press START on the second controller. Select your fighter and you will start with three continues. Now just beat up your former fighter and continue on through the game.

POPULOUS
Level select
Just type in the level you require, followed by BIT. For example, use the password 480BIT to get to level 480.

POWERBALL
Best team
Press B, B, C, B, B, C on the title screen.

POWERMONGER
Password
Final level – TJSDP2TJW7TI5PJ3DJ4PJLIKPHAKJEKOGQ

PREDATOR 2
Passwords
Level 4 – LOS ANGELES
Level 5 – TOTAL BODY

PRO BASEBALL SUPER LEAGUE 91
Beat everyone!
Go to the player change screen when you are fielding and press C. Answer yes to forget the match and you, strangely, win 1-0. It only works while you're fielding.

QUACKSHOT
Extra lives
Top up your lives by repeating this over and over again. Get to the Viking ship and go up the mast in the lift, collecting all the money bags. Walk right and follow the path down to the extra life. Now exit the screen, then re-enter it to see the reappearance of the extra life.

RAINBOW ISLANDS
Full complement
To get all the power-ups, on the title screen press UP, B, DOWN, LEFT, C, A, A, B and C.

RAMBO 3
Full complement
Fight to the two firing walls on level three. Destroy all bar one of the cannons, then put the yellow icon on the dagger and go to the bottom of the screen. Stab the man in camouflage and collect what he leaves behind. Repeat this to top up on everything.

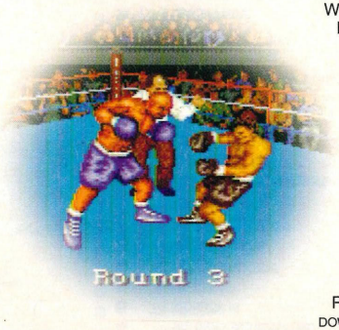
THE REVENGE OF SHINOBI
Infinite shurikens
Select zero shurikens on the options screen and leave the game for 40 seconds. The zero will then turn into an infinity sign (∞).

SOL-FEACE
Stage select
On the title screen, press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A and START. Go to the config level and put the cursor on Start. Choose the level number from here. During a game, press A, B and C simultaneously to skip a level.

SONIC
Level select
This is notoriously difficult to enter so do persevere because it does work. On the title screen (when Sonic's wagging his finger), push UP, DOWN, LEFT, RIGHT, A, C, B and C. You should hear a small noise if it's worked. Then press A and START simultaneously to enter the special options screen.

SONIC 2
Level select
Go to the sound test option and play sounds 19, 65, 09 and 17. Now press RESET and hold A and START.

SONIC 2
Super Sonic
Play 04, 01, 02, 06 on the sound test screen, then collect 50 rings in the game. Now when you press B and C you'll go Super Sonic!



SPACE HARRIER 2
Level select
While the space sequence is playing, press A, B and C together and move the joypad LEFT or RIGHT to choose a stage.

SPACE INVADERS 90
Level select
Press A, C and START together on the title screen. When the screen goes black, press B, A and C.

SPEEDBALL 2
Password
Division one: LCLI CWAF OBXE ya3q 2bst -is1 gGVC

SPIDER-MAN
Shortcut
On level one, get to the wall of boxes past the dog. Jump up to the second row and crawl to the right. You will pass through the wall and end up at the forklift.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2
Password
Level 8 – EDK VEI IAL LDL

STEEL EMPIRE
Level select
Go to the sound select option and play sounds 01, 01, 09 and 02.

STORMLORD
Reset clock
Pause the game and press B, A, A, A, C, UP, UP, UP, A, A, A.

STREET SMART
Extra lives
Reset quickly about 12 times, then choose options from the menu. Move the cursor to the sound test and press DOWN, DOWN, DOWN and A.

STREETS OF RAGE
Level select
Hold DOWN on player two's pad and press A, B and C then enter the options screen using player one's pad.

STREETS OF RAGE II
Level select
Plug in two controllers. On the intro screen hold A, B and C on both pads then press START on both. You'll hear a chime, then start the game. Pause the game, then press B and C on the first pad to bring up the level select.

TECHNOCOP
Full energy
Pause the game and press C ten times, A five times, B twice and A ten times.

TERMINATOR 2
Level skip
When you see "Press start" at the beginning, press UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT in sequence three times. You'll soon know if you've done it properly! During the game press B and C together to jump to the end of the level.

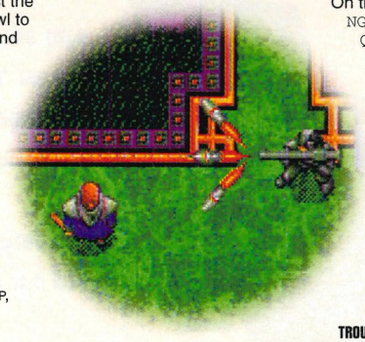
TEST DRIVE 2
Secret options
Start driving and press A, B, and C together to adjust the car's parameters.

THUNDERFORCE III
Full power-ups
Pause the game then press UP ten times, DOWN, B, DOWN, B, DOWN, B. Get all the weapons by pressing B and A.

THUNDERFORCE IV
Full weapons
Start the game then press pause. Now UP, RIGHT, A, DOWN, RIGHT, A, C, LEFT, UP and B. Now press UP for full weapons, DOWN to clear them, RIGHT for a claw and LEFT to get rid of it. Press START to return to the game.

THUNDER PRO WRESTLING
Extra continues
When Game Over appears, press UP and C.

TINY TOON ADVENTURES
Open all levels
On the password screen:
NGQQ WWQW QKWQ
QWWQ WGRY



TMNT
Level select
When the Konami logo appears, press C, B, B, A, A, A, B, C. On the title screen press A, B, B, C, C, C, B, A.

TOEJAM & EARL
Secret level
On the first level, drop through the hole in the island to land on level zero. Have a bath and drink some lemonade. Jump off this level to zoom up to the highest level.

TROUBLE SHOOTER
Level select
Plug in two controllers. On the title screen, press START, RIGHT and C simultaneously on the second pad. On the new screen, press START, RIGHT and C to increase the level number.

TRUXTON
Power bomb
Set off a skull explosion then pause the game while the explosion's in mid-flow. Wait about 15 seconds then unpause and the bomb will increase in power.

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT
Secret game
Enter your name as AZY and highlight mission BHA. Enter AZY and you will start to play *Black Ball Assault*! (Try entering your name as BIGNET and press START while fighting an opponent...)

CHUCK ROCK
Password
Level five – TSFVNP

COBRA COMMAND
Level select
On the title screen, press LEFT, RIGHT, A, B and C. Now press LEFT or RIGHT to change level.

EARNEST EVANS
Level skip
Pause the game and press UP, A, DOWN, B, LEFT, A, RIGHT, B. Now unpause.

HEAVY NOVA
Hidden bonus
In versus mode, if you manage to kill a guardian without losing any energy you'll get one million points! The same technique might work with your bank manager.

HOOK
99 lives
Drop to the bottom of the first pit in the caves on level five. Walk right and swim under the rocks to the leaf and 3-up. Pick them up then kill yourself. Just repeat the technique, killing yourslef each time, to top up your lives to the maximum.

KRIS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO
Hidden scene
On the caller screen, press A, B, C and RIGHT.

MARKY MARK: MAKE MY VIDEO
Hidden scene
Hold A and C. Press START to go to the U-Direct mode and then A, B, C and RIGHT to see Mr Wahberg and his girls.

NOSTALGIA 1907
Skip intro
Turn on and when "SEGA" appears, press and hold button C till "Sur De Wave" appears. That boring intro will now be ancient history.

ROAD AVENGER
Level select
From the start, push UP to access the options screen. Once there, press A six times. Now just play the game as usual.

SOL-FEACE
Extra options
On the title screen, press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B, A. Press START when you hear a sound effect. In Config Mode you'll now find Start and Mode. Go to Start and choose the start level with LEFT and RIGHT. Mode allows you to adjust the difficulty of the game, again with LEFT and RIGHT. If you press RIGHT a few times whilst holding A, you'll get "muteki", invincibility!

TIME GAL
Passwords
SHKXGJWF – 1991AD
XPTMCSHD – 2001AD
QWCDHRKT – 3001AD

WONDER DOG
Passwords
REEVES – Planet Weird
PIXIES – Planet Foggia
WOOPIE – Planet Kninus

POWER A–Z

Yep, here it is, the first Power A–Z. Unlike other A–Zs... well, no, actually it's pretty like other A–Zs, but of course there are the subtle differences that make MEGA POWER what it is.

First off, in the Power A–Z you'll find a listing of every single Mega Drive game we have discovered – regardless of its origin. If the game isn't officially available, we've written import in the price column. Obviously, as the months go by, we'll discover more and more information, like the Japanese producer, or perhaps info on the official release de

title	producer	price	comment	rating
1943		Import	Aircraft shoot-'em-up. Very dated but good, simple fun.	6
688 ATTACK SUB	Sega	£39.99	Difficult submarine simulation, hard to play but the effort is worth it.	7
THE ADDAMS FAMILY	Acclaim	£39.99	Creepy goings on as Gomez tries to find his family in this movie tie-in.	7
ADVANCED WW2 SIMULATOR		Import	Another difficult game, unfortunately you'll need a strong command of Japanese.	7
AERO BLASTER		Import	Too short and easy shoot-'em-up, two-player is fun though.	6
AFTER BURNER II	Sega	£34.99	Very accurate reproduction of the coin-op, but too easy	5
AIR DIVER		Import	Quite similar to *After Burner II*, but has more challenging gameplay and tougher guardians.	8
ALESTE (MUSHA)		Import	Very amusing shoot-'em-up. Detailed graphics, but a tad too easy.	8
ALEX KIDD IN ENCHANTED CASTLE	Sega	£29.99	Platform adventure that is packed with levels but becomes slightly tedious.	6
ALIEN^3	Flying Edge	£39.99	Good graphics and sound on this basic shoot-'em-up, but poor playability.	7
ALIEN STORM	Sega	£34.99	Another shoot-'em-up that is far too easy; the two-player option saves it.	6
ALISIA DRAGOON	Sega	£39.95	Help this babe through eight stages of tough guardians and few lives.	8
ALTERED BEAST	Sega	£34.99	The graphics are flickery and response slow. Don't rush out to buy it.	4
AMAZING TENNIS	Absolute	Import	Novel perspective from behind the player brings neat gameplay to this sim.	8
AMBITION OF CAESAR		Import	Dedicated to fans of strategy games, graphics are excellent.	7
AMERICAN GLADIATORS	Gametek	Import	The game from the crap TV programme; six events to pound through. Monotonous.	5
ANOTHER WORLD	Virgin	£39.99	Revolutionary animation, brilliantly detailed graphics and addictive gameplay.	9
AQUATIC GAMES	Electronic Arts	£39.99	James Pond competes in a series of fun sports. Great gameplay and graphics.	8
ARCH RIVALS	Flying Edge	£34.99	Manic basketball extravaganza. Keeps you enthralled for a few hours but soon wears off.	7
ARCUS ODYSSEY		Import	RPG in the style of *Gauntlet*. A much-needed password save makes this slightly easier.	9
ARIEL: THE LITTLE MERMAID	Sega	£39.99	Become either Ariel or Triton to defeat the forces of darkness. Plenty of vicious sharks.	7
ARNOLD PALMER TOUR GOLF	Sega	£34.99	Up against all the competition, this still proves to be an enjoyable simulation.	8
ARROW FLASH	Sega	£34.99	Very poor shoot-'em-up, grim graphics and sound. All round embarrassment.	2
ART ALIVE	Sega	£29.99	Art package that encourages you to draw on the MD, but you can't save it!	3
ASSAULT-SUIT-LEYNOS		Import	You are a robot who has to bash other robots. Innovative, but not much fun.	4
ATOMIC ROBOKID		Import	Scrolling shoot-'em-up, that's total rubbish.	3
ATOMIC RUNNER	Sega	£39.99	Impressive graphics and sound FX make this a good solid platform shoot-'em-up.	7
AXIS		Import	Worth seeing for the amazing 3-D graphics. Very addictive shoot-'em-up.	7
BACK TO THE FUTURE III	Imageworks	£39.99	Massive let down, don't even think of testing it.	1
BAD OMEN		Import	Break-Out clone, which is actually pretty good.	7
BART'S NIGHTMARE	Acclaim	£39.99	Third cartoon adventure of The Simpsons in which Bart plays mini-games to rescue his homework.	6
BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS	Flying Edge	£39.99	Fantastic everything in this game – even tons of challenge.	9
BATMAN	Sega	£39.99	Fine conversion. It may get a tad boring, but accurate graphics hold things together.	8

title	producer	price	comment	rating
F-1 CIRCUS		Import	*F-1 Circus* is one of the best arcade driving sims yet. Plenty of courses, plenty of gameplay.	8
F-1 GRAND PRIX		Import	Great sound FX and graphics with pukka visuals.	8
F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II	MicroProse	£39.99	While this certainly looks passable, it never reacts like a real plane would.	6
F-22 INTERCEPTOR	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Arcadey sim where you have to shoot at Iraq. See Saddam cry!	8
THE FAERY TALE ADVENTURE	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Fans of RPGs will love it; very accessible and ideal for newcomers.	8
FANTASIA	Sega	£39.99	Tough with great graphics, let down badly by the gameplay which is very annoying.	5
FATAL FURY	Sega	£44.99	*Street Fighter II* clone with varied moves but pretty dull.	6
FASTEST 1		Import	Split screen two-player racing – but that's about it.	4
FATAL LABYRINTH		Import	Far too easy for the experienced adventurer; good for novices.	6
FATAL REWIND	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Conversion of The Killing Game Show. Strong platformer with superb graphics.	7
FATMAN		Import	Punch-'em-up with comical characters parading across the screen.	6
FERRARI GRAND PRIX CHALLENGE	Flying Edge	£39.99	One of the worst racing games available. The ear-splitting sound doesn't help.	3
FIGHTING MASTERS		Import	Great visuals, atrocious game. Only for beat-'em-up wimps.	2
FINAL BLOW		Import	Boxing game that again looks great, but don't be fooled.	3
FIRE MUSTANG		Import	A WW2 shoot-'em-up that doesn't work. Large graphics enhance the slow pace of the game.	5
FIRE SHARK	Sega	£34.99	Fun shoot-'em-up with everything except challenge. Good graphics and tricky opponents.	7
FLICKY	Sega	£29.99	Tiny sprites, simple backgrounds and awful gameplay make this simply appalling.	2
FORGOTTEN WORLDS	Sega	£34.99	Shoot-'em-up with long stages and varied enemies. Tough but enjoyable.	7
G-LOC	Sega	£39.99	Almost identical to the arcade version. Take to the skies and blast away.	8
GADGET TWINS	Imagitec	£39.99	Action packed and very funny platformer. Brilliant graphics and wonderful cartoon FX.	9
GAIARES	Sega	£34.99	Impressive shoot-'em-up which will keep all blast fans happy.	8
GAIN GROUND	Sega	£34.99	Two-player game where you have to jump and shoot your way through a massive landscape.	8
GALAXY FORCE II	Sega	£39.99	So bad, it's unbelievable...	1
GENERAL CHAOS	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Novel shoot-'em-up war game where you must position soldiers to blast the enemy.	8
GEORGE FOREMAN'S KO BOXING	Acclaim	£39.99	Poor attempt that does nothing whatsoever to Acclaim's reputation.	5
GHOSTBUSTERS	Sega	£34.99	All the characters have been turned into Japanese mutants with large heads.	2
GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS	Sega	£44.99	Expensive but great arcade adventure that has already become a classic.	9
GLOBAL GLADIATORS	Virgin	£39.99	Wonderful platform game where you fire custard at slime monsters and collect McDonald's arches.	9
GODS	Renegade	Import	Not released here yet, but stunning graphics with authentic and powerful backgrounds.	9
GOLDEN AXE	Sega	£34.99	Great arcade game for its time but now looks terribly dated.	7
GOLDEN AXE II	Sega	£39.99	Easier than the original, it contains loads of new creatures and some good story screens.	7
GOLDEN AXE III	Sega	£34.99	What a waste of good programming time. Just like the other two, this shows absolutely no originality.	5
GRANADA X	Sega	£29.99	Control a 20-tonne tank to rescue a kidnapped girl. Very addictive.	8

BATMAN RETURNS	Sega	£39.99	A good sequel that proves very difficult. Five levels of hair-pulling frustration	7
BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER		Import	Better than all the other Sega versions, with large sprites and detailed backdrops	8
BATTLE GOLFER		Import	About the exploits of a golf ball and its travels. Sounds dodgy but it's good.	7
BATTLE SQUADRON	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Very tough shoot-'em-up, which is both challenging and looks great.	8
BEAST WARRIORS		Import	Don't be fooled by the pretty pictures, there's nothing nice about this game.	2
BIMINI RUN		Import	Outer-space shoot-'em-up that fails to impress. Funny but that's it.	5
BIO-HAZARD BATTLE	Sega	£39.99	High difficulty setting that is very colourful but lacks gameplay.	6
BILL WALSH COLLEGE FOOTBALL	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Much-needed development of the *John Madden* series for four players.	8
BIO SHIP: PALADIN		Import	Two-player shoot-'em-up with cool sound, but it's pretty easy.	5
BLOCK-OUT	Electronic Arts	£34.99	*Tetris* goes 3-D as you attempt to fit the blocks into a well. Very challenging.	7
BOB	Electronic Arts	£44.99	BOB's a strange little character with odd animation, although he can't stave off the poor gameplay.	5
BONANZA BROS	Sega	£34.99	Option of a two-player mode which makes it more fun but still too easy.	5
BUBSY	Accolade	£39.99	Massive pretender to the Sonic crown. Great graphics and sounds, although incredibly frustrating.	8
BUCK ROGERS	Electronic Arts	£49.99	Hugely challenging RPG with tons to do and difficulty set just right.	9
BUDOKHAN	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Good presentation, but it's another shallow beat-'em-up with limited moves.	5
BULLS VS LAKERS	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Re-live the 1991 NBA finals in this basketball sim. For die-hard fans only.	8
BURNING FORCE		Import	Awful beat-'em-up that isn't worth writing about.	1
CADASH		Import	Japanese arcade adventure. Fun to play with bright sprites and detailed backgrounds.	7
CALIBRE .50		Import	Vertical shoot-'em-up that is very mediocre.	3
CALIFORNIA GAMES	Sega	£39.99	Cool sports but rushed game. One for Surfers Steves only.	6
CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE AVENGERS	Sega	£34.99	Poor beat-'em-up worth playing in two-player mode only.	3
CASTLE OF ILLUSION	Sega	£39.99	A classic game. Great everything on this wonderful platform extravaganza.	9
CENTURION	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Historical strategy with excellent in-game maps. Unfortunately, the storyline is dodgy.	7
CHAKAN	Sega	£39.99	Taken from the comic book series. Creative graphics and music enhance this, but lacking in gameplay.	7
CHAMPIONSHIP BOWLING	Mentrix	Import	All the action's offscreen in this odd translation of ten-pin bowling.	4
CHAMPIONSHIP PRO-AM		Import	Racing game with good view of the track. Very appealing with great graphics and soundtrack.	7
CHIKI CHIKI BOYS	Sega	£34.99	This platform adventure offers very little, but younger players will enjoy it.	5
CHUCK ROCK	Virgin	£39.99	Stone Age palaver in this arcade adventure. Very funny and challenging.	8
CLUE		Import	Basically this is Cluedo on the MD. Not bad, but we'd rather buy the board game.	7
COOL SPOT	Virgin	£39.99	Original, fun and super cool. It's also very difficult and will keep you playing for ages.	9
COLUMNS	Sega	£29.99	Brilliant puzzle game, which will keep you totally hooked.	9
CORPORATION	Virgin	£39.99	A strange creature escapes from the labs. You have to kill the mutant and infiltrate the corporation.	9
CRACKDOWN	Sega	£39.99	Shoot everything that moves. Detailed graphics and addictive gameplay.	8
CRÜE BALL	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Fast and furious pinball sim, with ten tables and Motley Crüe music.	6
CURSE		Import	The worst game ever?	0
CYBERBALL	Sega	£34.99	Futuristic American football, with metal monsters, inaccurate graphics let it down.	5
DANGEROUS SEED		Import	12 levels of shooting away alien plant life. Makes for a novel and lengthy game.	8
DARIUS II		Import	Another 12-level shoot-'em-up, you can do the levels in any order.	8
DARK CASTLE	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Soundtrack saves this tedious offering. Poor animation and graphics.	4
DARWIN 4081	Import		Yet again you shoot aliens – not exactly 2010 philosophy, is it?	8
DAVE ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT	Sega	£39.99	Excellent sports simulation. Unfortunately the players aren't the real McCoy.	8
DAVIS CUP TENNIS	Tengen	£39.99	Totally accurate tennis sim – it even has players that argue! – but awkward player view.	7
DEADLY MOVES		Import	Street Fighter II clone that lacks depth as each wrestler has limited moves and only one special attack.	7
DEATH DUEL	Razorsoft	Import	Repetitive shoot-'em-up that is very tough but lacks everything else.	6
DECAPATTACK	Sega	£34.99	Gory killings from a gruesome head-chucking main character. Big and very playable.	8
DESERT STRIKE	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Prequel to Jungle Strike, with great graphics and sound, but not enough levels.	8
DEVILISH		Import	Similar to *Break-Out*, but with better graphics. Addictive bash-'em-down fun.	8
DICK TRACY	Sega	£34.99	Loads of neat cartoon statics and a decent attempt at character sprites, but lacks originality.	5
DINOLAND		Import	*Devil Crash* on a diet. Simple gameplay and poor scrolling.	3
DJ BOY		Import	Quite original, a beat-'em-up on roller skates, but again it's too easy.	5
DOUBLE CLUTCH	Sega	£34.95	Viewed from above, this little race game should appeal to all ages, particularly the young.	7
DOUBLE DRAGON	Ballistic	£29.99	Arcade-style, two-player beat-'em-up. Much better than the sequel.	7
DOUBLE DRAGON II		Import	Flickery graphics, slow characters and tiresome gameplay.	2
DOUBLE DRAGON III	Flying Edge	£39.99	They should have stopped at the first one.	3
DRACULA	Sony	£39.99	Simple, exploitative translation of the Coppola movie, severely lacking in originality – unlike the movie.	4
DRAGON'S FURY	Domark	£39.99	Official release of *Devil Crush*. Very addictive game that has superb graphics and sound.	8
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS	Sega	£39.99	Superb graphics on this RPG and unlimited challenge make this a must.	8
DYNAMITE DUKE	Sega	£34.99	Loads of punks to mow down if you like that sort of thing. Far too easy.	6
EARNEST EVANS		Import	Guide your intrepid explorer through countless scenarios in this colourful adventure.	7
EA HOCKEY	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Prequel to *NHLPA Hockey*. Lots of gameplay, without all the intricacies.	9
ECCO	Sega	£39.99	If you like dolphins, you'll love this. *Hugely* original with stunning graphics and sound.	9
ELEMENTAL MASTER		Import	Shoot-'em-up where you've seen it all before. Gameplay is addictive and involving.	7
EL VIENTO		Import	Looks great and plays as well. Brilliant manga animation and statics.	8
ESWAT	Sega	£34.99	Parallax, multi-directional scrolling gives the impression of a huge game. Challenging and addictive.	8
EUROPEAN CLUB SOCCER	Virgin	£39.99	First decent soccer sim. Moves are convincing and creates a believable atmosphere.	7
EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S BOXING	Sega	£39.99	Well defined sprites and challenging gameplay make this an impressive sim.	8
EXILE		Import	A strange mixture of RPG, platform and puzzle makes *Exile* an intriguing game to play.	8
EX-MUTANTS	Sega	£34.99	Save the population from extinction in the aftermath of WW3. Let down by the gameplay.	6
F1	Domark	£44.99	Probably one of the most accurate driving sims around, but seriously flawed in its gameplay.	7
GRANDSLAM TENNIS	Sega	£39.99	Plain tennis game which offers nothing new.	5
GREENDOG	Sega	£39.99	Greendog is one cool Steve-dude. Guide him through wild lands on this well-animated platformer.	8
GREY LANCER		Import	Ultra-fast scrolling shoot-'em-up with a great soundtrack and superb gameplay.	9
GUNSTAR HEROES	Sega	£39.99	Looks brilliant, but is incredibly tedious as you try to kill the frequent guardians with thousands(!) of hits.	6
GYNOUG	Sega	£34.99	Nasty guardians and good gameplay make this worth looking at.	7
HARDBALL	Accolade	£34.99	Baseball sim that looks good but offers nothing.	3
HARDBALL III	Accolade	£39.99	Will keep fans happy with great gameplay and excellent graphics.	8
HARD DRIVIN'	Tengen	£39.99	Two levels limit this well-executed driving sim.	7
HAUNTING	Electronic Arts	£49.99	Encouragingly original adventure ghost game in which you scare the pants off a rich family.	7
HEAVY NOVA		Import	Robots beat each other up, boring.	3
HEAVY UNIT		Import	Best thing on this shoot-'em-up is that you can change the shape of your ship.	6
HELLFIRE	Sega	£34.99	Weird wacky shoot-'em-up that has a loyal following.	8
HERZOG ZWEI	Sega	£34.99	Strategy and arcade combined, where you fight tanks. Odd name, eh?	6
HOME ALONE	Sega	£39.99	Spin-off from the movie: poor graphics and sound, with dodgy gameplay	4
HUMANS	Imagitec	£34.99	Puzzle game in which humans are controlled to clear levels. Good graphics and sound.	8
IMMORTAL, THE	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Tough puzzler with brilliant visuals. There are 20 different gory death sequences.	8
INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE	US Gold	£39.99	Platformer that follows the film well, but short and easy levels.	6
INSECTOR X		Import	Superb shoot-'em-up, where graphics, sound and gameplay are brilliant.	9
ISHIDO: THE WAY OF THE STONES	Accolade	£34.99	Boardgame based on *Shanghai*. Okay but boardgame conversions at dodgy.	6
J LEAGUE PRO STRIKER	Sega	Import	Once in a while there comes a game that knocks us for six. *J League* is one of those games.	9
JAMES BOND - THE DUEL	Domark	£39.99	Neat animation and flawless graphics are helped by spot-on FX.	8
JAMES POND	Electronic Arts	£39.99	First MD game to be programmed solely in the UK. Quite bland but very playable.	6
JAMES POND II	Electronic Arts	£39.99	The graphics are very slick, the gameplay is challenging and overall very funny.	9
JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS	Sega	£34.99	Another plain tennis game, very basic all round.	4
JEWEL MASTER	Sega	£34.99	Initially impressive but far too repetitive.	6
JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL	Sega	£34.99	Not even Joe Montana can save this boring American football game.	4
JOE MONTANA II	Sega	£34.99	Real-speech commentary helps the sequel, but still needs work in game department.	6
JOE MONTANA III	Sega	£34.99	It just gets better and better, retaining all the good things from the previous games.	8
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL	Electronic Arts	£39.99	The original game that started the trend. Intelligent play, but simple moves.	7
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL 92	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Updated graphics and sound make this a worthy upgrade.	8
JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL 93	Electronic Arts	£39.99	More of stats update for die-hard fans, and folks who haven't got the others.	8
JORDAN VS BIRD	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Average basketball game that unfortunately lacks depth.	5
JUNCTION		Import	By mixing a *Pipe Mania*-type game with a slide puzzle the result is a very challenging foray.	8
JUNGLE STRIKE	Electronic Arts	£44.99	More of the same mindless *Desert Strike* encounters, but bigger and better than before.	9
KABUKI SOLDIER		Import	Beat-'em-up featuring sumo wrestlers – not bad.	6
KA-GE-KI		Import	Also known as Fists of Steel. Grim, grim, ultra-grim.	3
KID CHAMELEON	Sega	£39.99	The kid must venture everywhere to save his mates in a constantly changing game.	8
KING COLOSSUS	Sega	Import	Japanese adventure game. Nine levels of adventuring.	4
KING'S BOUNTY	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Rather boring RPG with huge amounts of bland landscape to cover.	6
KING SALMON		Import	Fishing sim with Japanese text. Sounds quite naff but is actually very addictive.	8
KLAX	Domark	£39.99	Excellent but infuriating puzzle with constantly changing graphics.	8
KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE	Flying Edge	£39.95	The Simpsons make an appearance, but a simple puzzle game really.	6
LANDSTALKER	Sega	Import	In Japanese but great adventure game with tremendous graphics.	8
LAKERS VS CELTICS	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Incredibly realistic, with all the players from that season. Basketball fans only.	7
LAST BATTLE	Sega	£34.99	Disappointing beat-'em-up with slow, boring gameplay.	5
THE LEGEND OF GALAHAD	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Average platform with an element of RPG.	6
LEMMINGS	Sega	£39.99	One of the finest puzzle games on cart. Extremely addictive.	9
LHX ATTACK CHOPPER	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Helicopter sim that isn't original, but will appeal to war junkies.	6
LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Very good racing game, enhanced by speed, superb graphics and split screen.	8
M1 ABRAMS BATTLE TANK	Sega	£39.99	If you like tanks then you won't be disappointed here. Lots of trundling around aimlessly.	7
MARBLE MADNESS	Electronic Arts	£34.99	Replica of the arcade classic which is still brilliant, but limited.	7
MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY	Sega	£39.99	Viewing the match from the side fails dismally, making it very hard to work out moves.	6
MARVEL LAND		Import	Platform adventure which will test your reactions and skill. *Marvel*ous graphics.	8
MASTER OF MONSTERS		Import	Boring strategy where only the monsters win.	1
MASTER OF WEAPON		Import	Scrolling shoot-'em-up which is very fast but over too quickly.	7
MAZIN WARS	Sega	£39.99	Cyberpunk adventure through a post-nuclear landscape. Looks good, but is monotonous.	6
MEGA-LO-MANIA	Virgin	£39.99	Brilliant gameplay and very challenging. Requires a lot of thought!	8
MEGAPANEL		Import	Tetris, but better presented. Interesting graphics and varied gameplay.	8
MEGA TRAX		Import	4x4 beach racer that doesn't live up to expectations.	4
MERCS	Sega	£39.99	Identical to the arcade, beefy sounds and graphics.	7
MICRO MACHINES	Codemasters	£39.99	Race your miniature car around the breakfast table. Stupid but brilliant.	9
MIDNIGHT MADNESS		Import	Average coin-op conversion which fails to impress.	4
MIGHT & MAGIC	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Popular RPG which grows on you the more you play it.	8
MIKE DITKA FOOTBALL	Ballistic	£34.99	Similar to *John Madden* but without the character – still good, though.	8
MONOPOLY		Import	Fair representation of the game with good animation. But why buy it instead of the boardgame?	6
MONSTER HUNTER		Import	Controlling a sword-wielding young lass may appeal, but it becomes very tedious.	4
MOONWALKER	Sega	£34.99	Save Michael's captured children (if you must). Detailed graphics, smooth animation and great sound.	8
MORTAL KOMBAT	Acclaim	£49.99	Expensive *Street Fighter II* basher with lots of flaws, but also lots of fun.	8
MS PACMAN		Import	Much worse than the arcade version. Should have *pac*ked her bags and given up by now.	2

POWER A-Z

title	producer	price	comment	rating
MUHAMMAD ALI'S HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING	Virgin	£39.99	The best bruiser in the ring. *Ali* has many options, great visuals and gob-smacking sound.	8
NHLPA HOCKEY	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Simply one of the best sports simulations you can slam into your machine. Super fast, super real.	9
NINJA BURAI		Import	RPG that requires an understanding of Japanese.	7
OLYMPIC GOLD	US Gold	£39.99	Good simulation that is best played with two or more players.	8
ONSLAUGHT	Ballistic	Import	Medieval platform beat-'em-up that comes highly recommended.	8
OUTLANDER		Import	Drive 'n' blast game that will please anyone who fancies themselves as Mad Max .	6
OUT RUN	Sega	£39.99	Arcade conversion that is very similar and still great fun even now.	7
OUTRUN 2019	Sega	£39.99	Set in the future, on a par with *Out Run*.	8
PAC-MANIA	Domark	£34.99	The graphics are excellent which makes the whole thing a joy to play.	8
PAPERBOY	Domark	£39.99	Lots of new streets and even more hazards, but lacks two-player mode.	6
PAPERBOY 2	Domark	£39.99	Still no two-player mode, and pretty much the same but slightly bigger.	7
PGA TOUR GOLF	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Better than *Arnold Palmer* with four courses and great graphics.	8
PGA TOUR GOLF II	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Fantastic follow-up to PGA, with more courses and bigger, better challenge.	9
PHANTASY SOLDIER 3	Sega	Import	Quality platform adventure with excellent graphics and even better gameplay.	9
PHANTASY STAR II	Sega	£59.99	Mammoth RPG which is fairly easy to get into, but still very tough – and steep!	8
PHANTASY STAR III	Sega	£49.99	Ten quid cheaper than the original with improved graphics. But the sound is still very weak.	8
PHELIOS	Sega	£34.99	Very average shoot-'em-up, which you'll probably finish the day you get it.	6
PIGSKIN FOOTBRAWL		Import	Much more violent than American football which it's loosely based on. Also has two-player mode.	7
PIT-FIGHTER	Domark	£49.99	Digitized graphics and gut-wrenching sounds enhance the experience of battering someone to death.	8
POPULOUS	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Certainly isn't an action game, yet the strategy isn't complex enough.	6
POWERBALL		Import	A cross between wrestling, martial arts and soccer. Innovative but poorly executed.	7
POWERMONGER	Electronic Arts	£39.99	A land mission has to be undertaken, unfortunately the graphics and sound let it down.	7
POWER CHALLENGE	Accolade	£39.99	Not much different from every other golfing game, although the graphics are noteworthy.	7
PREDATOR 2	Flying Edge	£34.99	Seven stages of futuristic street violence with plenty of hostage rescuing to be done.	8
PRO QUARTERBACK		Import	Ardent sports fans will enjoy it, but it is totally unoriginal.	7
QUACKSHOT	Sega	£39.99	Splendid Disney game with Donald starring in a superb platform adventure.	9
QUAD CHALLENGE		Import	Four-wheeler buggies racing around a race track. Utterly useless.	2
RAIDEN TRAD		Import	More shoot-'em-up fare from the Far East. Nothing new but quite challenging.	6
RAINBOW ISLANDS		Import	Two games in one on this brilliant platformer. Totally addictive gameplay and awesome tunes.	9
RAMBO III	Sega	£29.99	Shoot the annoying inhabitants of a forest sounds boring, doesn't it. Well, it is.	5
RANGER-X	Sega	£39.99	Amazing-looking shoot-'em-up with double the usual number of colours onscreen.	8
RASTAN SAGA 2		Import	Guide your gallant hero through a maze of dangly platforms. Poor gameplay, decent graphics.	5
RBI 3 BASEBALL		Import	Baseball sim without a difference. Screens full of stats and difficult batting motion.	6
RBI 4 BASEBALL		Import	Hitting the ball is hard enough. Once you've done this, you'll discover the outfield to be totally bland.	6
RBI BASEBALL '93	Tengen	Import	Yet another baseball sim in the RBI series. Only for real armchair sports fans.	6
REVENGE OF SHINOBI, THE	Sega	£34.99	Considered to be one of the best beat-'em-up games, and rightly so.	8
RINGSIDE ANGEL		Import	Sluggish gameplay ruins this women's wrestling game. Good inlay, though.	6
RINGS OF POWER	Electronic Arts	£49.95	Colourful, extremely large and exceedingly difficult. Brilliant nonetheless.	9
RISKY WOODS	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Varied backgrounds and atmospheric music make this fun to play.	7
ROAD BLASTERS		Import	Converted from the coin-op, but unfortunately it is dismally poor.	3
ROAD RASH	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Race a motorbike through the countryside, overtaking or clubbing other competitors. Great fun.	9
ROAD RASH II	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Virtually the same as the first but with the added bonus of two-player split screen.	9
ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES	Konami	£44.99	Smooth jaunt in the traditional style of *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*. Quite special.	9
ROLLING THUNDER 2	Sega	£39.99	Encounter hoods, panthers and 18-wheel juggernauts. How *James Bond* should have been.	8
RUNARK		Import	Save the world's wildlife in this Indy-style adventure beat-'em-up. Untapped potential.	5
SAINT SWORD		Import	You've guessed it: a man with a sword, boring graphics and crap animation.	5
SD VALIS		Import	Sad Japanese arcade adventure with very little content to keep you playing.	3
SHADOW BLASTERS		Import	A beat-'em-up which fails to impress; poor graphics and virtually non-existent gameplay.	4
SHADOW DANCER	Sega	£39.99	In this beat-'em-up a dog does the dirty work for you, which adds an amusing dimension.	8
SHADOW OF THE BEAST	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Psychedelic graphics enhance this otherwise poor platformer that becomes very monotonous.	5
SHADOW OF THE BEAST II	Electronic Arts	£39.99	This sequel combines teasing puzzles with atmospheric and mystical graphics.	7
SHINING IN THE DARKNESS	Sega	£44.99	Hugely addictive, with fantastic graphics and very challenging gameplay.	8
SHINING FORCE	Sega	£44.99	12Mbit sequel to *Darkness*, featuring more intelligence and improved gameplay.	9
SHINOBI III	Sega	£34.99	Tremendous platform adventure with loads of pick-ups and plenty of ninja magic.	8
SHOVE-IT		Import	As the title implies, you literally shove things into where they belong. How dull...	3
SIDE POCKET	Sega	£34.99	Uneventful pool simulation. The tables are dull but a few trick games and extra options liven it up.	6
SLIMEWORLD		Import	Todd has to escape the planet of slimy surroundings. Too green to make this bearable.	6
SUPER BATTLETANK		Import	Tank sim that may appeal to your basic instincts, ie, point, shoot, blow up.	3
SUPER FANTASY ZONE	Sega	£34.99	Big guardians and small sprites. Good fun for a while.	6
SUPER HANG-ON	Sega	£34.99	Exciting motor-biking from this arcade classic.	8
SUPER HIGH IMPACT		Import	Good animation on this American football sim, but as usual sad lack of challenge.	6
SUPER HQ		Import	Arcade conversion from *Chase HQ* that doesn't live up to expectations.	4
SUPER HYDLIDE	Sega	£34.99	Very boring RPG that has nothing new to offer.	4
SUPER KICK OFF	US Gold	£39.99	Good in its day but now looks dated next to *J League*.	8
SUPER LEAGUE BASEBALL	Sega	£34.99	Offers enough options to stave off boredom. One of the decent attempts at the sport.	8
SUPER MILITARY		Import	Good war game that sets the scene for a challenging confrontation.	8
SUPER MONACO GP	Sega	£34.99	Everything else is here, just lacks a two-player mode.	8
SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX II	Sega	£49.99	Good graphics, but that's it on this rehash of the first game. A real con at £50!	4
SUPER OFF ROAD	Ballistic	£29.99	All the sights and sounds are here on this 4x4 truck racing game. Great fun, cute trucks.	8
SUPER REAL BASKETBALL	Sega	£34.99	Neat sound FX and good graphics scoring sequences which make this enjoyable to play.	8
SUPER SMASH TV	Acclaim	£29.99	Highly *acclaimed* arcade game that is very tough. Bit flickery, though.	8
SUPER THUNDER BLADE	Sega	£34.99	A shoot-'em-up that's claim to fame is the two views – all it does is confuse gameplay.	6
SUPER VOLLEYBALL		Import	Side-view with super scrolling makes this a good, albeit odd, interpretation.	8
SUPER WRESTLEMANIA	Flying Edge	£39.99	Addictive two-player action in the ultimate WWF simulation.	8
SWORD OF SODAN	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Difficult to get into with sluggish gameplay.	3
SWORD OF VERMILION	Sega	£49.99	Massive RPG which is incredibly tough. Fantastic graphics, large landscape.	8
TAILSPIN	Sega	£39.99	Boring platformer with an additional shoot-'em-up section. Bad Disney licence – shock!	6
TASK FORCE HARRIER EX		Import	Poor American offering that has dodgy graphics and gameplay.	5
TAZ MANIA	Sega	£39.95	Ambient backdrops and a charismatic main sprite give this game that something special.	9
TEAM USA BASKETBALL	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Dodgy sound FX and animation let down the graphics.	6
TECHNOCOP		Import	Racing sim combined with platform investigation scenes. Naff conversion of a naff original.	2
TECHNOCLASH	Electronic Arts	£44.99	Splendid adventure based around good old-fashioned RPG principles.	8
TECMO WORLD CUP '93	Sega	£34.99	Best played on the two- player mode for the most fun. Limiting moves.	7
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	Konami	£39.99	Great beat-'em-up, with bright backdrops and colourful turtles.	8
TEL TEL BASEBALL		Import	Terry Venables baseball tie-in – er, no sorry, funny Jap baseball game. Whoops, sorry, Tel.	6
TERMINATOR, THE	Virgin	£39.99	Packed with stills from the movie linking the four stages. Great blasting but too short.	8
TERMINATOR 2: THE ARCADE GAME	Acclaim	£39.99	Use either the joypad or the Menacer. Nine stages of fantastic virtual realism.	9
TEST DRIVE 2: THE DUEL	Ballistic	£34.99	The success of this game lies in the car handling which feels just like the real thing.	8
THUNDER FORCE II	Sega	£34.99	Strong challenge and overall presentation with some super backdrops.	7
THUNDER FORCE III	Sega	£34.99	Better than the original, this will have you playing for ages.	8
THUNDER FORCE IV	Sega	£39.99	Magnificent graphics and gameplay. Shoot-'em-up at the peak.	9
THUNDERFOX		Import	Check machine compatibility, but you're not missing anything.	3
THUNDER PRO WRESTLING		Import	Limited moves means it's not much fun to play	5
TIGER HELI		Import	Totally uninspiring helicopter game with dubious graphics.	2
TINY TOON ADVENTURES	Konami	£39.99	Wonderful adventure that borrows much from the Warner Bros cartoons.	9
TOEJAM & EARL	Sega	£34.99	Cartoon graphics and some brilliant sampled sound. Weird sense of humour.	8
TOKI	Sega	£34.99	Great platformer with arcade-quality graphics. Bit too easy, though.	8
TORA! TORA! TORA!		Import	Average shoot-'em-up which has little to offer if you want something different.	7
TOXIC CRUSADERS		Import	Take control of Toxie and help him in this dire scrolling arcade adventure.	3
TRAMPOLINE TERROR		Import	Nothing to do with trampolines. Not even bouncy or fun.	1
TROUBLE SHOOTER		Import	Female stars in Forgotten Worlds type game. Makes for a good looking and colourful game.	7
TRUXTON	Sega	£34.99	A normal but easy vertical shoot-'em-up that's immense fun. *Tatsujin* on import.	8
TURBO OUT RUN	Sega	£39.99	*Out Run* was brilliant, this sadly lacks any turbo charge.	4
TURRICAN	Ballistic	£34.99	The innovative shooting technique adds a new twist to this platform shoot-'em-up.	8
TWIN COBRA	Sega	£34.99	Control a helicopter through dreary battle zones.	4
TWIN HAWK	Sega	£34.99	Average shoot-'em-up that is very easy.	5
TWINKLE TALE		Import	A psychedelic Japanese shoot-'em-up which plays well. Intense and challenging.	8
TWO CRUDE DUDES	Sega	£34.99	The stars are two muscle men who are hell-bent on going on the rampage. Destructive fun.	8
TWO TRIBES	Virgin	£44.99	The sequel to *Populous* has more powers, better graphics and bigger landscapes. Action-oriented strategy.	9
ULTIMATE QIX		Import	Plays like Othello, but totally rubbish with very few console-inspired surprises.	4
ULTIMATE SOCCER	Sega	£39.99	Fast, furious and full of options, but fails to deliver in the all-important gameplay department.	5
UNDEADLINE		Import	Zombie level guardians add humour to this shoot-'em-up. Wicked title.	8
UNIVERSAL SOLDIER	Accolade	£39.99	Not as tough as it looks, but super gameplay. Could be called Turrican 2.	8
VALIS		Import	The original hack-'em-till-they-die arcade adventure. Worth a playtest for a laugh.	7
VALIS III		Import	Looks great but is incredibly boring. Should have left it at *Valis*.	6

SNOW BROTHERS	Tengen	Import	Looks and plays like *Bubble Bobble*, but may be completed too quickly.	8
SOKOBHAN		Import	Not much fun as you move crates around a warehouse. Like working at Tesco.	5
SOL-FEACE		Import	A CD conversion without the sound quality. A very average shoot-'em-up.	5
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG	Sega	£34.99	A bit easy now, but still the first truly outstanding Mega Drive game.	8
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2	Sega	£39.99	Best game of 1992, this time Sonic has a mate, and again Sonic's miles ahead of the rest.	9
SPACE HARRIER II	Sega	£34.99	Awkward playing view and poor sound don't help this weak game.	5
SPACE INVADERS '90		Import	Classic game updated. Still holds all the magic, but lacks the polish.	6
SPEEDBALL II	Virgin	£39.99	Techno-rugby for the insane – pitch and players are both superb giving a futuristic feel.	9
SPIDER-MAN	Sega	£39.99	Strong story screens and very tough gameplay on this brilliant platform beat-'em-up.	8
SPLATTERHOUSE 2	Namco	£39.95	Eight stages of blood-thirsty and totally outrageous graphics, combined with equally sadistic music.	8
SPLATTERHOUSE 3	Namco	Import	More gruesome and gory goings-on in the land where Jason Vorhees is king.	8
SPORTS TALK BASEBALL	Sega	£39.95	Strong sim based on *Montana II* speech system. Works well, excellent graphics and great fun.	8
STAR CRUISER		Import	Completely unplayable due to Japanese text. For language students only.	3
STARFLIGHT	Electronic Arts	£49.99	Deep space mining is the name of this game. Plenty of combat and strategy.	8
STEEL EMPIRE	Acclaim	£39.95	Horizontal shoot-'em-up with huge sprites, which tends to become monotonous.	5
STEEL TALONS	Domark	£39.99	Chopper combat at a lower level. Not exactly *Desert Strike*.	5
STORMLORD	Ballistic	Import	Adventure game with intriguing but not difficult puzzles	7
STREET SMART	Sega	£34.99	Beat-'em-up with limited gameplay due to the small array of martial arts moves.	6
STREETS OF RAGE	Sega	£34.99	Beat-'em-up that was well-hyped but lacks challenge. Moves and sound FX make up for this.	8
STREETS OF RAGE II	Sega	£44.99	16Mbit cart which has been used to its full potential. Teamplay and versus modes make it worthwhile.	9
STRIDER	Sega	£44.99	All stages bar the last are easily completed. Held together by colourful graphics and smooth sprites.	8
STRIDER II	US Gold	£44.99	More of the same slick Strider action, but little development on the original action adventure.	7
SUNSET RIDERS	Konami	£39.99	Authentic cowboy and indian action on this platform shooter that shouldn't be ignored.	8
SUPERMAN	Virgin	£39.99	Pretty difficult which in turn makes it frustrating. A bit of a disappointment.	6
SUPER AIRWOLF		Import	Also known as *Crossfire*, this shoot-'em-up packs a punch. No TV tie-in evident, though.	7
VAPOR TRAIL		Import	Fun to play with some very fast gameplay, but not enough challenges.	5
VERYTEX		Import	Scrolling shooter that is actually quite good. Tough guardians and enemies throughout.	8
WANI WANI WORLD		Import	Psychedelic graphics, with very addictive two-player mode. Like *Bubble Bobble*.	8
WARDNER SPECIAL		Import	Usual elements, but with sheer lack of detail from this poor arcade shooter conversion.	4
WARPSPEED	Accolade	£34.99	Deep space shoot-'em-up lacking enough strategy to keep *Elite* fans enthralled.	6
WARSONG		Import	Wargame where you'll have to be patient to appreciate it. One for armchair generals.	8
WHEEL OF FORTUNE	Gametek	Import	Absolute rubbish with 4500 uninteresting questions	2
WHERE IN THE WORLD IS...?	Electronic Arts	£39.99	Edutainment game that tends to become boring for the experienced adventurer.	6
WHERE IN TIME IS...?	Electronic Arts	£49.99	More successful attempt than its predecessor.	8
WHIP RUSH	Sega	£34.99	Very playable and extremely fast shoot-'em-up with good gameplay. Dodgy title.	8
WINTER CHALLENGE	Ballistic	£39.99	Eight different events make up this snow-laden epic. Very original.	8
WONDER BOY III	Sega	£34.99	Two-player game is brilliant fun and very interactive. Recommended for two players only.	7
WONDER BOY IV	Sega	£39.99	More fun than the original, but not an all-time classic.	8
WONDER BOY V	Sega	£39.99	Should have stopped by now, no difference really.	7
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	US Gold	£39.99	Has speech samples, but nowhere near PGA Golf.	6
WORLD CUP ITALIA 90	Sega	£29.99	Limited moves, but still pretty good. Reasonably priced which is definitely a plus point.	8
WORLD OF ILLUSION	Sega	£39.99	Outstanding Disney graphics and animation, which will keep young and old compelled.	9
WRESTLE WAR	Sega	£34.99	Getting the moves worked out with your joypad is more hard work than the actual game.	7
XDR		Import	Mysterious shoot-'em-up, mainly due to Jap text base. Mediocre gameplay.	5
XENON II	Virgin	£39.99	Excellent shoot-'em-up that falters slightly with occasional screen slowdown.	8
X-MEN	Sega	£34.99	Should really have done a straight conversion from the arcade, but it's still okay.	7
Y'S 3: WANDERERS FROM Y'S	Sega		In-depth RPG which offers a considerable challenge. Fans of tough games will love it.	8
ZANY GOLF	Electronic Arts	£39.99	More insane than crazy golf at the seaside. Fun game with very polished presentation.	9
ZERO WING	Sega	£39.95	Horizontal shooter which is flawed by its small graphics and ease of completion.	7
ZOOM	Sega	£29.99	Cheap and cheerful puzzler. Average graphics and sound. Soon gets boring and frustrating	4

MEGA CD.

ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH, THE	Dynamix	Import	Pretty wacky adventures of a young lad who mucks about all the time.	8
AFTER BURNER III	CRS	Import	What a waste of a good CD. Why bother sticking this ageing game on it?	4
BATMAN RETURNS	Sega	£39.99	Basically the cart version, but the added music is superb – well worth paying extra.	7
BLACK HOLE ASSAULT	Sega	£39.99	Heavy Nova wasn't much cop, and this is little improvement over it.	5
CHUCK ROCK	Sony	Import	Seems strange to stick this Mega Drive game on CD. Not bad though.	7
COBRA COMMAND	Wolfteam	£39.99	Amazingly popular on import as Thunder Storm FX. Great visuals, limited gameplay.	7
DEVASTATOR	Wolfteam	Import	Bar the flash intro, this could easily have been on cartridge. Simple shoot-'em-up stuff.	5
EARNEST EVANS	Wolfteam	Import	One of the first, and still pretty impressive both visually and aurally.	7
ECCO	Sega	£44.99	Five more levels and some brilliant ambient music lift this one above the waves of CD dross.	9
FUNKY HORROR BAND	Sega	Import	Take the band on a trip through a strange land. Funny but incomprehensible.	5
HEAVY NOVA	Micronet	Import	An early robot beat-'em-up that is laboriously slow.	5
HOOK	Sony	Import	Beautifully enchanting story, with glorious visuals, but poor gameplay.	7
INXS: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sega	£39.99	For £30 less, you could get more videos made by a professional.	6
JAGUAR XJ220	Sega	£44.99	Very disappointing race game. Waste of a CD, get Lotus on cart instead.	4
KRIS KROSS: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sony	Import	Odd concept disc where you cut and edit your own videos. Limited appeal.	5
MARKY MARK: MAKE MY VIDEO	Sony	Import	Better quality than Kris Kross – pity Marky Mark's a dunce.	6
NIGHT STRIKER	Taito	Import	Well-rough shoot-'em-up from a first-person perspective. Far too easy for a CD game.	2
PRINCE OF PERSIA	Sega	£39.99	Another Mega Drive cart conversion. Very difficult, but looks and sounds impressive.	7
NIGHT TRAP	Sega	£49.99	The first of a new era of CD movie games. Big and very challenging.	8
RISE OF THE DRAGON	Dynamix	Import	Superbly atmospheric adventure puts you in the shoes of Blade hunter PI. Excellent.	8
ROAD AVENGER	Wolfteam	£39.99	Official version of Road Blaster FX. Looks fine, but allows little control over what happens.	7
ROBO ALESTE	Compile	Import	Looks great, with the obligatory intro screens, but is just a shoot-'em-up.	5
SEGA CLASSICS: ARCADE	Sega	n/a	Golden Axe, Super Monaco GP, Columns, Streets of Rage and The Revenge of Shinobi.	7
SHERLOCK HOLMES	Sega	£44.99	Quite an amusing attempt at a mystery game. Only three cases to solve, though.	8
SHERLOCK HOLMES II	Sega	£39.99	Double-disk extravaganza with three more cases. Same interface and graphics as the first game.	6
SILPHEED	Sega	£39.99	Flagship Mega-CD pusher that fails to ignite after an explosive intro. Basically, just another shoot-'em-up.	5
SOL-FEACE	Sega	£39.99	The original CD shoot-'em-up with mad music, wicked effects and tough gameplay.	8
SUPER LEAGUE CD	Sega	Import	Grimola. This is one waste of good plastic. Looks dire and plays like a brick.	3
SWITCH	Sega	Import	It's crazy, it's wacky, it's *Switch*! The computer wiring's gone wrong but Switch can fix it.	6
TIME GAL	Wolfteam	£44.99	Tons of ways to die in this Jappy cartoon adventure. Perfect difficulty ensures long-term play.	8
WONDER DOG	Sega/JVC	Import	A great game, admittedly, but why stick this on Mega-CD? Nothing exploits the format.	8
WOLFCHILD	Sega	£39.99	A freak experiment turns into disaster as the inventor is kidnapped. Tedious and predictable stuff.	6

RECOMMENDED

So many titles, some good, some not so good. We pick the games that we most regularly slam into our machines and explain why you should be doing the same.

J LEAGUE

This game for me seems to be falling into the same category as PGA Golf, in so much that I just can't stop playing it. The attraction is that it's just wonderful. Having played other football games, I can't find one that's in the same league. The sprites are pretty massive so picking out who's who causes no problems at all. Some might say that it's slow, well, I totally disagree. Other football games which have loads of speed cannot compare: why? Well I'll tell you why, there's a lot of skill involved in J League. You can't just pick it up and be an instant champ. Loads of practise is needed if you want to remain undefeated. The options aren't huge, and being in Japanese doesn't help much, but it makes no difference, it's unstoppable.

ROLLING THUNDER 2

Namcot have always had a strange relationship with Sega. Like their brilliant *Marvel Land,* Namcot's *Rolling Thunder 2* was also initially ignored by Sega Europe. Luckily for us, Sega saw the light and this great platform adventure is available for all to see. The great thing about *Rolling Thunder 2* is the way it creates an atmosphere akin to a James Bond movie. And there's no way you're going to sail through this as every level requires different tactics and new skills. As the game's so hard, it's a relief to have such a unique password system, revolving around strange phrases and words. If you want a game packed with espionage, excitement, simultaneous platform action and incredible graphics and sound, you can do no better than this.

KING SALMON

Anybody who slagged off this game deserves a good kicking. Probably the most stupid idea for a game to date, *King Salmon* is an excellent one-off title. No game on the Sega has captured my imagination more than this one. Alright the Japanese text is a real pain but you soon work it all out once you start playing. Somehow it contains all the tension and suspense of real fishing without the pong, and there is a real skill in bringing in the big fish. Believe me, you would be surprised at the shattering feeling of losing a 24 pound salmon because the line snapped or you got snagged in weed.

I played this game at every opportunity I got but had to return it to the importers. I miss it desperately and if anyone knows how I can get hold of a copy I'd be very grateful to hear from them.

MEGA POWER

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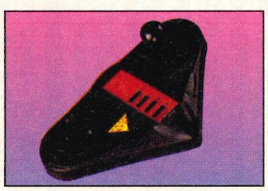
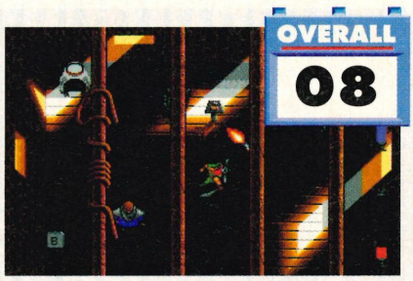


SG PROPAD £14.99

VOYAGER CONTROL PAD £14.99

TECHNOCLASH



Power review----------issue 1

"Spell-wielding, shoot'em-up mayhem as you try to save your medievil world from a futuristic onslaught. Great combination of RPG and blasting."

power saver price -------£44.00

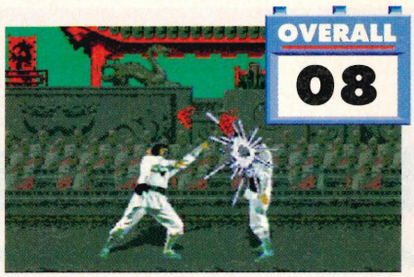
JUNGLE STRIKE

Power review----------issue 1

"Excellent helicopter challenge. In a sequel to *Desert Strike EA* send you out in your sate-of-the-art chopper to wage war on the drug barons."

power saver price -------£38.99

MORTAL KOMBAT



Power review----------issue 2

"Launched on Mortal Monday, this bruiser looks set to challenge *Street Fighter II* for the title of beat'em-up of the year."

power saver price -------£49.00

BUBSY

Power review----------issue 2

"Far cooler than Sonic, Bubsy is on a mission to search for yarn balls and keep them from marauding aliens. Very fast and very difficult. "

power saver price -------£39.00

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mega power 4 on sale october 21

POWER charts

HIGH STREET CHARTS

Compiled with the help of HMV, Our Price and Virgin.

mega drive

position	last month	months in chart	game title
1	(1)	3	**Jungle Strike**

Popular follow-up to *Desert Strike* pits you against Ortega's ruthless son.

2	(5)	2	**Bubsy**

Super cute Sonic-basher from Accolade. Bigger, brighter and just as fast.

3	(2)	3	**Micro Machines**

US Gold's unplayable conversion of Anco's top computer footy game.

4	(3)	3	**Flashback**

Super smooth animation in one of the year's best platform adventures.

5	(-)	1	**X-Men**

Ropey super-hero beat'em-up that fails to set the screen alight.

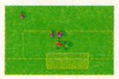
6	(-)	1	**Tiny Toon Adventures**

Enter the cartoon world of Buster Bunny and his animated pals in Konami's blockbuster release.

7	(7)	3	**PGA Tour Golf II**

Uprated and much better version takes you around America's top courses.

8	(6)	3	**Super Kick Off**



US Gold's unplayable conversion of Anco's top computer footy game.

9	(4)	3	**Cool Spot**

Follow the adventures of the 7-UP's Spot in Virgin's summer scorcher.

10	(-)	1	**MiG-29**

Bodged UK version of appalling import game selling on the strength of the licence.

mega-cd

1	(1)	1	**Night Trap**

Controversial 15-rated action adventure with full motion action from well shot footage.

2	(2)	1	**Final Fight CD**

Highly praised two-player conversion of the arcade beat-'em-up – better than the SNES attempt.

3	(4)	3	**Road Avenger**

Official version of the original futuristic Wolfteam racer *Road Blaster FX*.

4	(3)	3	**Jaguar XJ220**

Core/Sega's poor, unexploited attempt to put a fast track racer on CD.

5	(3)	2	**Sherlock Holmes**

Interesting concept game that fails to ignite the expected intrigue and mystery.

INDEPENDENT CHARTS

Compiled with the help of Video Games Centre and Lansdowne computers.

mega drive

position	last month	months in chart	game title
1	(1)	1	**Jungle Strike**

EA's successful sequel to *Desert Strike,* their top-selling shoot-'em-up adventure.

2	(-)	1	**Bubsy**

Super cute Sonic-basher from Accolade. Bigger, brighter and just as fast.

3	(4)	3	**Micro Machines**

They are small, they are fast and they are living inside your Sega – worried?

4	(-)	1	**Jurassic Park**

Excellent movie licence, that is both atmospheric and challenging.

5	(6)	3	**Cool Spot**

Dave Perry's beautiful, humorous adventure in search of ultimate coolness.

6	(-)	1	**X-Men**

Ropey super-hero beat'em-up that fails to set the screen alight..

7	(-)	1	**The Flintstones**

Yabba-dabba-doo! Fred, Barney, Wilma and Betty bring the classic cartoon to the console.

8	(3)	3	**Flashback**

US Gold's conversion of the successful Delphine computer adventure.

9	(2)	2	**Shining Force**

Massive 12Mbit follow-up to *Shining in the Darkness* now in English.

10	(-)	1	**Fatal Fury**

Poor *Street-Fighter II* rip-off that's success shows just how violence starved Sega owners are.

mega-cd

1	(1)	2	**Final Fight CD**

The ultimate brutal beat-'em-up on any compact disc format is a must-buy.

2	(-)	1	**Night Trap**

Controversial 15-rated action adventure with full motion action from well shot footage.

3	(5)	2	**Time Gal**

The cute and crazy girl from Japan squeaks her through attractive timezones.

4	(2)	2	**Silpheed**

The first of Sega's new generation of Mega-CD games. Over-hyped, over-priced and over here.

5	(3)	3	**Ecco**

Complete with Q-sound and a handful of extra levels, the dolphin dives in.

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